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TAYLOR, JAMES,ROBERT,FRANCIS

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## Abstract

The standard view of Greek tyranny is that it was a unique phenomenon in the ancient Greek world, representing neither continuity nor a long-lived institution. The *turannoi* are generally described as illegitimate leaders who seized power with the support of the lower classes, usurping the rule of the aristocrats. This school of thought locates the origins of Greek tyranny in the supposed changes in the economic and social climate around the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. Although the image of the tyrant as a populist leader has come under attack in recent years, there has been no attempt to challenge the theory that tyranny was a new phenomenon in the seventh and sixth centuries. This thesis contends that the *turannoi* were not a new form of ruler born from the supposed turmoil of this period. In reality, the word *turannos* came to represent a new way of thinking about an old style of leadership. This thesis shows that the Greek tyrants represented a continuation of the form of leadership practised by the Homeric *basileis*. As new ideas about law and order were formed in the seventh century, such as limited terms of office and magistrates with divided powers, these *basileis* began to be seen as a negative force by those engaging with the new political concepts and institutions. This change in attitude caused the traditional *basileis* to become the polar opposite of what was thought to be good for the *polis*, and not at all compatible with *eunomia*. Their apparent irreverence towards *dikaiosune* was at odds with the political atmosphere of the Archaic and Classical Greek *polis*. These rulers were not seen as representing continuity or a traditional form of rule, but became abhorrent to those practising the new ways of law and politics, attracting the label *turannos*.

# **Ancient Greek Tyranny: A New Phenomenon or a New Name for an Old Phenomenon?**

**James Robert Francis Taylor**

**A thesis submitted to the Department of Classics and Ancient History at  
Durham University for the qualification of Doctor of Philosophy**

**2016**

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## Abbreviations

Abbreviations are from the *OCD*. When not available in the *OCD* they are the author's.

<i>FGrH</i>	F. Jacoby, <i>Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> (1923-)
Fornara	C.W. Fornara (ed.), <i>Archaic Times to the end of the Peloponnesian War</i> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> edn.: <i>Translated Documents of Greece and Rome</i> 1 (1983)
<i>IC</i>	M. Guarducci (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Creticae</i> , 4 vols (1935-1950)
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> (1873-)
<i>IvO</i>	<i>Inschriften von Olympia</i> , ed. W. Dittenberger and K. Purgold (1896)
Koerner	R. Koerner, <i>Inchriftliche Gesetzestexte der frühen griechischen Polis</i> (1993)
<i>LSAG</i>	L. Jeffery, <i>Local Scripts of Archaic Greece</i> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> edn., rev. A. Johnston (1990)
Meiggs and Lewis	R. Meiggs and D. Lewis (eds.), <i>A selection of Greek historical inscriptions to the end of the fifth century B.C.</i> (1988)

<i>Nomima I</i>	H. van Effenterre, and F. Ruzé (eds.), <i>Nomima : recueil d'inscriptions politiques et juridiques de l'archaïsme grec</i> . Vol 1 (1994-95).
Rhodes and Osborne	P.J. Rhodes and R. Osborne (eds.), <i>Greek historical inscriptions, 404-323 BC</i> (2003).
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum</i> (1923-)
Tod	M.N. Tod (ed.), <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the end of the fifth century B.C.</i> (1946)

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## Introduction

### *a) Previous scholarship*

Archaic and Classical sources mention many tyrants taking power during the Archaic period. The word *turannos* is not present in Homer or Hesiod and its sudden appearance in poetry from the seventh century combined with the presence of numerous tyrants in Herodotus' account of the Archaic period has given the impression that *turannoi* were a new phenomenon. Historians have viewed these tyrants as a new form of ruler and have tried to explain the rise of tyranny in various ways. None of these theories is satisfactory and a new approach to Greek tyranny is clearly required. Recent developments in the study of Archaic Greek archaeology and historiography have made the traditional theories regarding the rise of tyranny in Greece untenable. In the fields of Greek archaeology and history, new discoveries have totally undermined the reliability of established ideas, such as the Archaic 'hoplite revolution' and 'population explosion' that were widely accepted and consequently factored into the course of Greek political history. As the study of Greek, particularly Archaic, history developed in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, phenomena such as the hoplite revolution were either recognised to post-date the first recorded tyrant or, like the so-called Archaic population explosion, demonstrated to have never occurred. As the socio-economic factors that were originally believed to have caused the phenomenon of tyranny have been disproven or shifted chronologically, it has become clear that a new examination of the origins of Greek tyranny is necessary. This thesis shows that the Greek tyrants were not a new form of ruler born out of a period of socio-economic crisis, but an old form of ruler that was demonised by those Greeks who subscribed to the rule-of-law

ideology that began to emerge in Greece c.650.<sup>1</sup> This introduction will review the most recent scholarship that has contributed to the debate on the origins of Greek tyranny. This will not be a comprehensive review of all scholarship concerned with Greek tyranny, but aims to provide an accurate picture of the development of scholarly explanations for the supposed rise of tyranny in the seventh century. The remainder of the introduction will then provide a summary of the four chapters of the thesis and a section on the methodology for working with the various forms of literary sources.

Scholarship on Greek tyranny, and particularly its origins, has attributed the rise of tyranny in Greece to a number of factors. There is no single linear development of scholarly thought regarding Greek tyranny but several theories have generally dominated the field. Andrewes' (1956) book on tyranny was a highly influential work that arguably first popularised the question of the origins of Greek tyranny among Anglophone scholars. Andrewes cited three main factors that caused the rise of tyranny in Greece. These were military, racial and economic factors combined with Anderson's confident belief in the existence of a fixed class of Greek nobles.<sup>2</sup> The racial factor, which described simmering resentment between Dorians and other Greeks never found any real traction among scholars.<sup>3</sup> The idea was discarded due to the almost total lack of evidence for an association between Archaic tyrants and racial tensions. Andrewes' argument was compelled to lean heavily on one or two anecdotes, such as Cleisthenes' animal epithets for Dorian tribes, rather

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<sup>1</sup> All dates are B.C. unless otherwise stated.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Andrewes (1956) 84-85.

<sup>3</sup> Andrewes (1956) 54-66. Bicknell (1982) 200, for example, has noted that there is no positive evidence for this phenomenon. See also Will (1956) 39-55 and Roussel (1976) 251-253.

than any broad pattern of substantive historical or archaeological evidence to advance this theory.

Andrewes' military factor, which depicted the tyrants leading the hoplites against the local nobles, has been promoted by a number of scholars since 1956 and the theory of strife between tyrants and an established class of aristocrats is still very popular.<sup>4</sup> Berve (1967) also subscribed to the idea that tyrants were the new leaders of the hoplite militias whose participation in combat had destroyed the nobles' monopoly on community defence. Berve envisioned the hoplites raising men as their champions to draft new legislation to suit their interests, some of whom inevitably became tyrants.<sup>5</sup> Pleket (1969) continued the theme of class struggle articulated by Andrewes and Berve, but combined it with significant mercenary support, to create a picture of Archaic tyrants as leaders of the poor, backed by hired troops, against a closed class of aristocrats and landowners.<sup>6</sup> A paper by Drews (1972) argued against Andrewes' stance, providing one of the earliest arguments against the view of tyrants as social and economic reformers.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Drews rightly dismissed the hoplite revolution as a serious catalyst for the appearance of Greek tyrants.<sup>8</sup> Drews however retained the assumption that Greek tyranny was essentially a new phenomenon that arose in the seventh century, insisting that hoplite-style equipment was used for the first time in the seventh century, and that tyrants were men who gathered *epikouroi* armed with these weapons to seize control of the community.<sup>9</sup> This view ignored the evidence for arms and armour in Homer, where the warriors wore a panoply identical

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<sup>4</sup> Andrewes (1956) 31-42.

<sup>5</sup> Berve (1967) 10-11.

<sup>6</sup> Pleket (1969) on mercenaries, 26-29; on Pisistratus' followers being 'undoubtedly the poorest', 29; opposed by the 'aristocrats', 32.

<sup>7</sup> Drews (1972) 132.

<sup>8</sup> Drews (1972) 136.

<sup>9</sup> Drews (1972) 143-144.

to that depicted on Archaic pottery, and omitted any discussion of the plethora of methods and social practices Greek tyrants used to gain power outside of military force. Despite the validity of Drews' argument against the socio-economic struggle as the main catalyst for the rise of tyranny it failed to gain widespread acceptance among historians. Indeed the work of Luraghi (1994) on tyranny in Greek Sicily and Italy, while providing a welcome study of western Greek tyranny that would be omitted by de Libero's later work, ultimately fell back on the established ideas of social crisis and violent class struggle.<sup>10</sup> A paper by Parker (1996) dealt directly with the question of the emergence of ancient Greek tyranny. It proposed that the tyrants were part of a process of linear development through kings, aristocracies and tyrants. According to Parker, the first tyrants presented themselves as legitimate kings and appealed for a return to ancestral rule.<sup>11</sup> While this 'reverses' Andrewes' original theory of tyrants as social reformers, it ultimately subscribes to the same view of an Archaic Greek society divided into distinct classes. A paper by Anderson (2005) reacted against the notion, held for example by Andrewes and Pleket, that tyrants were unorthodox usurpers. 'Prior to the late sixth century, I contend, there was in fact no absolute distinction between *turannoi* and orthodox leaders in Greek poleis. The former aimed to dominate established oligarchies, not to subvert them. A *turannis* was not yet a species of political regime, illegitimate or otherwise. Rather, it was mainstream oligarchic leadership in its most amplified form, conventional de facto authority writ large.'<sup>12</sup> While Anderson correctly argued against the idea of tyrants as usurpers opposed to an orthodox oligarchy, his view of tyranny as representing conventional leadership in the Archaic period is unconvincing. While personal rule had existed since at least the eighth century, Anderson's view that

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<sup>10</sup> E.g. Luraghi (1994) 71.

<sup>11</sup> Parker (1996) 165-186.

<sup>12</sup> Anderson (2005) 173.

naked power constituted a form of rule that was socially acceptable does not fit the evidence. As we shall see in Chapter II, the evidence of Archaic poetry and of Herodotus suggests that by the Archaic period tyranny was not socially acceptable to the Greeks. Indeed, Chapter I will discuss certain behaviours of Homeric *basileis* that were deeply unpopular and even unacceptable to the communities they ruled. A volume of collected essays edited by Lewis (2006) provided scholars with a wide-ranging collection of papers on Greek and Roman tyranny but none of these addressed the enigma of the origins of tyranny directly. Like Drews, Lewis (2009) went on to reject the support of a hoplite class as a fundamental factor in the rise of tyrants.<sup>13</sup> Lewis, however, also subscribed to the theory of tyrants as social reformers and redistributors of power from the traditional nobles to the *demos*. Lewis also adhered to the concept of fixed classes in Archaic Greece, particularly an upper class nobility that fought among itself with the victor emerging as a tyrant.<sup>14</sup> A paper by Cawkwell (1995) joined Drews in reacting against the view of the tyrant as a ruler raised up by the masses; essentially propelled into power by a wave of popular support and resentment against economic exploitation. Cawkwell rightly noted that ‘tyranny had nothing to do with the alleged hoplite class.’<sup>15</sup> However, Cawkwell’s conclusion that ‘The People did not come into it’ is perhaps not satisfactory.<sup>16</sup> The significance of popular support for tyrants will be discussed later in this thesis.

For Andrewes, the ‘economic factor’ meant an Archaic landscape where small landowners were indebted to the rich and where the introduction of coinage had made borrowing and lending easier but encouraged more farmers to fall into

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<sup>13</sup> Lewis (2009) 25-27.

<sup>14</sup> Lewis (2009) 21.

<sup>15</sup> Cawkwell (1995) 82.

<sup>16</sup> Cawkwell (1995) 86.

debt.<sup>17</sup> Such a situation supposedly made tyranny attractive to the poor who expected a redistribution of land. This theory was based on a particular interpretation of Solon's poetry as describing land reform or a cancellation of debts, which has since been decisively refuted by Harris.<sup>18</sup> Andrewes' description of an Archaic Greece devastated by economic catastrophe and social turmoil has been adopted and promoted by several scholars since 1956, including Oliva (1960)<sup>19</sup> and Berve. Mossé (1969) did not attempt a comprehensive study of Greek tyranny in the style of Berve, but selected individuals to study from each period of Greek history. While the book discussed the various theories behind the rise of tyranny, Mossé declined to commit to one herself, although the work generally leans towards economic tension between rich and the exploited poor.<sup>20</sup> Smith's (1989) handbook on the Athenian tyrants did not take into account the valid criticisms made by Drews in 1972 and persisted in viewing tyrants as enemies of the traditional aristocrats, despite some supposedly being aristocratic themselves. Smith saw the tyrants as being propelled into power on a wave of economic resentment.<sup>21</sup> Smith's use of Aristotle and Thucydides to discuss Archaic society and Archaic problems, instead of the poetry of Hesiod, Solon and Theognis, illustrates the danger in using anachronistic later sources which encourage the historian to draw conclusions which are contradicted by the earlier evidence.

A volume edited by Sancisi-Weerdenburg (2000) provided a fresh look at the evidence for the tyranny of the Pisistratids, drawing on the work of scholars from

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<sup>17</sup> Andrewes (1956) 82.

<sup>18</sup> Harris (1997) 103-112.

<sup>19</sup> Oliva (1979) 236: 'In dieser Zeit des ökonomischen Aufschwungs und der sozialen Wirren kommen in mehreren griechischen Gemeinden Männer an die Regierung, die mit dem seltsamen und dunklen Namen τύραννοι bezeichnet wurden.' In Kinzl's 1979 volume but originally published in 1960.

<sup>20</sup> Mossé (1969) 3-9.

<sup>21</sup> Smith (1989) 2, 12-15.

several disciplines. The essays in this volume made several well-informed points. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, for example, joined Drews and Cawkwell by arguing that the Pisistratid tyranny was built on personal power rather than a semi-constitutional office of tyrant,<sup>22</sup> although she remained tied to the idea of an Archaic aristocracy.<sup>23</sup> The volume's focus on the Pisistratids resulted in a lack of comparative data with other Archaic tyrants, whose behaviour can be used to corroborate the accounts of the Pisistratid tyranny and help identify anachronisms in the post-Archaic sources. The work of Lavelle (2005) on the Pisistratid tyranny took the opposite view to Cawkwell's 1995 essay, citing Pisistratus' personal popularity among the Athenians, garnered largely from his success as a war-leader rather than socio-economic resentment, as the main 'springboard' for his tyranny.<sup>24</sup> Lavelle also offered a welcome discussion on the importance of wealth (*chremata*) for the success of the tyranny,<sup>25</sup> but did not explore its specific uses or make extensive comparisons with other Archaic tyrants. Mitchell's (2013) book on the rulers of Greece promoted the important and useful view that the tyrant's means of taking power were essentially personal by discussing the use of family and the accumulation of support through displays of personal prowess. Mitchell's focus, however, tended towards nebulous ideas, such as the prestige of ancestry,<sup>26</sup> rather than the practical methods that the tyrants used to gain and maintain power. Mitchell also concurred with Anderson's suggestion that tyrants were members of a closed oligarchic elite which competed among itself for power.<sup>27</sup> This view has also been adopted by the recent work of Carty (2015). This monograph on Polycrates states that elite factionalism provided

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<sup>22</sup> Sancisi-Weerdenburg (2000) 14-15.

<sup>23</sup> E.g. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (2000) 10.

<sup>24</sup> Lavelle (2005) 155-157.

<sup>25</sup> Lavelle (2005) 159.

<sup>26</sup> Mitchell (2013) 58-59.

<sup>27</sup> Mitchell (2013) 60-61.

the background for the tyranny,<sup>28</sup> while the theory that Polycrates was enriched by supplying large numbers of slave-soldiers to Egypt is original but unconvincing.<sup>29</sup> The lack of Greek evidence for this practice combined with the comparatively abundant evidence for the nature of Homeric and Archaic *epikouroi* contradicts this theory.

Stahl's (1987) book on aristocracy and tyranny in Archaic Athens is difficult to categorise thematically as it did not commit wholly to military revolution or class conflict. Stahl argued for an unstable society of competing aristocrats where a state of *stasis* was more or less the norm until one supremely successful aristocrat established himself as tyrant.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Stahl's argument that tyrants and other influential individuals relied on their own resources and personal efforts to gain power was correct, as this thesis will show. We shall also see, however, that the normalisation of *stasis* as a feature of Archaic society is not supported by the descriptions of the phenomenon in Archaic poetry. Barceló's (1993) view that the early Archaic political landscape was dominated by intensely agonistic, competing aristocrats, the most successful of whom might become a tyrant, indicated a scholarly shift away from the economic arguments of Andrewes that had been anticipated by Stahl several years earlier. Like Stahl, Barceló retained the rigid theory of class and the ubiquitous but vaguely defined Archaic aristocracy.<sup>31</sup> The strong belief in an Archaic aristocracy and its link with tyranny culminated in a book by Stein-Hölkeskamp (1989) on aristocratic culture and *polis* society. Although tyranny itself was not the focus of this work, Stein-Hölkeskamp saw the Pisistratid

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<sup>28</sup> Carty (2015) 23.

<sup>29</sup> Carty (2015) 155-169.

<sup>30</sup> Stahl (1987) 56-105.

<sup>31</sup> Barceló (1993) 89-90.



family and their behaviour as a continuance of Greek 'Adelskultur',<sup>32</sup> arguing for tyranny as an aristocratic phenomenon. This stance was also taken by de Libero (1996). Stein-Hölkeskamp's book offered no alternative to the theories of Stahl and Barceló on the nature and background of Greek tyranny, although Stein-Hölkeskamp later cited a land shortage as the cause for severe impoverishment and indebtedness in the Archaic period.<sup>33</sup>

While there has been no linear development of scholarship on Greek tyranny, scholars have become more inclined in recent years to see tyranny as the result of personal power. Scholars such as Andrewes and Lavelle, who have searched for the practical methods through which tyrants took power, ultimately prepared the way for the question addressed by this thesis. Indeed, Andrewes provided a short but useful section on the maintenance of Pisistratid power at Athens which discussed several practical methods for securing power.<sup>34</sup> It is, however, clear that none of these theories above adequately explains the supposed appearance of tyranny in seventh-century Greece. Each one can be refuted by the discoveries of recent archaeology, the historicity of Homeric society, and by treating the Archaic sources critically. Furthermore, previous scholarship has not acknowledged the significance of the rule of law in creating a political atmosphere in Greece in which monarchy was regarded as dangerous, threatening and fundamentally unjust. To explain the phenomenon of tyranny a new approach to the subject is clearly needed. This thesis provides this approach by showing that Greek tyranny was not in fact a new phenomenon, but an

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<sup>32</sup> Stein-Hölkeskamp (1989) 152: 'Überhaupt muß man die Baupolitik der Tyrannen auf jeden Fall in den Kontext der überkommenen aristokratischen Selbstdarstellungsrituale stellen und sie somit als Fortführung und zugleich höchste Steigerung eines zentralen Aspekts der griechischen „Adelskultur“ interpretieren.'

<sup>33</sup> Stein-Hölkeskamp (1996) 656-657.

<sup>34</sup> Andrewes (1956) 107-113.

old form of ruler given a new name by the Greeks who adhered to the rule-of-law ideology.

This thesis represents an original approach to the phenomenon of Greek tyranny. First, it does not begin with the unsupported assumption that tyranny was a new phenomenon in seventh-century Greece. Instead it traces the behaviour of Greek rulers from the eighth century to the fourth and finds their behaviour to be consistent. Second, it does not subscribe to the established assumptions regarding the socio-economic conditions of Archaic Greece. Instead, it treats Homer, Hesiod and the Archaic poets as a body of evidence from which it is possible to discover the substantive problems faced by Greek society from the eighth to the sixth century. Third, it does not attempt to narrate the careers of individual tyrants in chronological order. Instead, it collects sources that provide evidence regarding the behaviour of Homeric *basileis* and tyrants. This approach increases the amount of evidence available and avoids the need to use untrustworthy, late or heavily biased sources to create a biographical account of a single tyrant. Several monographs on specific, particularly Archaic, tyrants have accepted the statements of late or hostile sources despite the fact they cannot be corroborated. Consequently, they have struggled to explain anomalies caused by anachronism or to fit anachronistic statements into their narrative.<sup>35</sup> Their attempts to plug the extensive gaps in the historical record have also led to a great deal of speculation, rather than evidence-based discussion.<sup>36</sup> Fourth, this thesis focuses on the clear continuity represented by the Greek tyrants,

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<sup>35</sup> E.g. Lavelle (2005); Carty (2015); Strauss (1963) 28-29, for example, noted the difficulty in discovering the intent of the author of Xenophon's *Hiero* through investigating the work's content.

<sup>36</sup> This is not true of every monograph on tyrants. For example the works of Caven (1990) and Sprawski (1999), on Dionysius I and Jason of Pherae respectively, make extensive use of the available evidence and led these scholars to question some of the established assumptions regarding tyrants. E.g. Caven (1990) 78-79.

and shows that the means by which sole rulers took power in Greece remained consistent from the eighth century to the fourth. Fifth, this approach does not focus on the works of the philosophers as evidence for Greek tyranny. Whilst the philosophers, particularly Plato and Aristotle, have been heavily utilised by previous scholars, the philosophical writings of the Classical period are, as we shall see, demonstrably anachronistic when applied to Archaic Greece. Over-reliance on these sources by historians of Archaic Greece led, for example, to the construction of the Archaic economic crisis that finds so little support in archaeology and contemporary sources. Classical philosophical sources, however, remain useful in discussing the Classical view of tyranny, particularly from the perspective of those Greeks fully immersed in the-rule-of-law ideology. These texts also raise interesting questions about the relative popularity of monarchy among Classical Greek thinkers and the general citizenry. However, as the purpose of this thesis is to understand and explain the rise of tyranny in the Archaic period, Archaic sources will be utilised as far as possible in the second and third chapters. The fourth chapter, which discusses Classical tyranny, will utilise philosophical sources where appropriate but will give them no position of pre-eminence. To answer the question raised by this thesis, it is crucial that the practical methods through which tyrants took power are identified. Philosophical texts generally focus on the moral degradation of the tyrant rather than recording the steps he took to seize power. Therefore the philosophical texts offer limited opportunities for gathering the evidence required by this thesis.

#### *b) Summary of chapters*

Chapter I investigates the methods used by the Homeric *basileis* to gain and maintain power. The first part establishes the historicity of Homeric society and its date as late

eightth century. The chapter then shows that the *basileis* achieved power through military success and maintained power through private wealth and certain social practices. The third part discusses the private ownership of slaves, land and the agricultural surplus they produced for the *basileis* that could be exchanged for luxury goods or distributed to friends and followers. The fourth part of the chapter discusses certain social practices that the *basileis* employed to gain, increase or maintain power. The approach of this chapter is unique as it opposes the interpretations of a quasi-feudal Homeric society, shows that there were alternative methods of taking power rather than inherited status, and does not attempt to impose an institution of kingship on Homeric Greece. Instead, the chapter focuses on the personal nature of the rule of the *basileis* and the practical methods that secured their position at the head of the community.

Chapter II is a discussion of the state of Greek society in the Archaic period and identifies the particular problems that it faced. The purpose of this chapter is to show that the evidence does not support the socio-economic causes for the rise of tyranny. It will then identify the actual problems faced by the Archaic Greeks, showing that these were combated by the rule-of-law ideology that in turn demonised and discredited monarchy. In the first part the chapter shows that the existence of the supposed socio-economic crises of the Archaic period is not supported by any compelling evidence. These issues have traditionally been identified as overpopulation; the rise of a trade or craft-based *nouveau riche* who demanded a share of power from the landed aristocracy; the supposed rise of a Greek middle-class composed of hoplite soldiers whose contribution to warfare suddenly provoked them into becoming politically aware; discontent caused by an unfair

system of land tenure. These are the most significant factors that have been suggested as major causes of civil strife and political upheaval in the Archaic period. The second part of Chapter II then identifies and discusses the actual crises experienced by the Archaic Greeks. These problems were a lack of labour to work the lands of the rich; *hybris* (meaning aggression and flagrant corruption motivated by greed); a lack of preventative measures against violence and corruption. This part also shows that these problems existed because the very practices that individuals used to gain power in Homeric society, as discussed in Chapter I, and the Archaic period demanded the consumption of large amounts of wealth and therefore incentivised violence, theft and corruption. The third part of Chapter II discusses the rise of the rule-of-law ideology in Archaic Greece and shows why some Greeks found it to be a desirable system to implement. It then identifies the features of the rule of law, such as separation of powers and term limits for offices, which were obviously incompatible with the rule of one man, and which led to the demonization of the style of rule practised by the Homeric *basileis*.

Chapter III identifies the methods used by Archaic tyrants to gain and maintain power. The aim of this chapter is to show that the behaviour of Archaic tyrants remained consistent with that of Homeric rulers, and that Archaic tyranny represented continuity, not revolution. Consequently, Chapter III follows a broadly similar structure to the sections of Chapter I on military success, wealth and social practices in Homeric society. The Archaic tyrants maintained the practices of the eighth-century *basileis* to increase their personal wealth and power while cultivating popular support. Chapter IV identifies the methods used by Classical tyrants to gain and maintain power. The aim of this chapter is to show once again that the behaviour

of Classical tyrants represented continuity, not revolution. It therefore continues to follow a broadly similar structure to chapters I and III on military success, wealth and social practices. Chapter IV deviates slightly from the structure of Chapter III by explaining the relatively small differences between Archaic and Classical tyranny. Following the evidence, this chapter shows that the supposed differences between Archaic and Classical tyrants vanish on closer inspection and that their behaviour is once again entirely consistent with their predecessors. The thesis concludes by summarising its argument and by offering concluding remarks on the nature of Greek tyranny. It then explains the significance of this thesis' argument for wider Greek history.

### *c) Methodology*

This thesis utilises sources from a number of different genres, such as Homeric oral poetry, Archaic poetry, fifth-century prose, historiography and philosophy. Each genre poses a unique set of challenges to historical enquiry. Homeric poetry represents an oral tradition, not a historical record. As will be discussed in Chapter I, anthropology tells us that a record of actual events would have been subservient to the poet's need to conform to the expectations of his audience and to the structure of the plot. Furthermore, elements of myth and magic must be disentangled from actual descriptions of society, ritual or warfare. Archaic poetry offers a different set of problems. The poets, or their personas, engage in a moralising discourse, attempting to convince their audiences of the best way to live or organise a community, *in their view*. Some, for example Theognis, were openly hostile to individuals they would accuse of tyranny, raising the question of whether or not these individuals were genuinely tyrants and actually guilty of the acts of

which they were accused. In addition to the potential issues of oral deformation found in the anecdotes preserved in, for example, Herodotus, the later prose and historiography of the fifth century was created at a time when the rule-of-law ideology was already two centuries old. Hostility to, and fear of, tyranny was deeply ingrained by this time, as we shall see. It is not difficult to suspect that Classical sources allowed their horror of tyranny to influence their descriptions of monarchical figures. Furthermore, the interests of Greek historiography usually lie elsewhere other than the means tyrants used to take power. For example, Thucydides was concerned with the causes and effects of the Peloponnesian War, not the phenomenon of tyranny. The evidence gleaned about tyranny from his history is usually found in descriptions of peripheral figures and chance descriptions of political activity in foreign states. The philosophical texts are particularly problematic. While the philosophers present a similar problem to that of Archaic poetry, in that they attempt to promote particular modes of living and governance, they pose a new challenge by imposing the social, legal and economic conditions of the Classical period onto the Archaic past.

Despite the challenges presented by these genres, this thesis approaches these sources as a body of evidence from which it is possible to source substantive evidence for Greek society from the eighth to the sixth century. The problems they pose can be mitigated by adopting an evidence-based methodology when using the Homeric poems or the literary sources. Where possible, this thesis employs the sources that are chronologically closest to the periods it is investigating. It avoids using isolated examples of events or practices, instead gathering pools of evidence that can be corroborated. These two simple approaches reduce the chances of

anachronisms creeping into the historical account and mitigate the effects of oral distortion and folk memory by checking the consistency of accounts with a large number of similar instances. This also increases the amount of evidence drawn from contemporary sources and avoids the need to rely on the testimony of much later sources. As we shall see, Classical and later sources often projected the conditions of their own times onto the Archaic period and depicted societal conditions that are not present in any Archaic source, such as Aristotle's description of the rise of a hoplite class (Arist. *Pol.* 4.1297b.14-29). This thesis will attempt to use as much evidence as possible while not being overly reliant on the later material.

While there is certainly a strong bias against tyranny in the majority of the sources, this does not necessarily pose a major problem to the question of this thesis. A number of sources are openly hostile to tyrants and some besmirch their enemies or individuals they disapproved of with accusations of tyranny. These accounts, however, still represent Greek views of how tyrants were *expected* to behave, and unbelievable accusations levelled at one's enemies and opponents would have had no meaning. Regarding the broader content of Archaic poetry, it is certainly necessary to maintain an awareness of the fact that the poet worked to convince his audience of a particular idea or of his hostility to certain behaviours or individuals. It is, however, also possible to corroborate the concerns of Archaic poetry with tyranny, violence, and corruption with legal inscriptions and their substantive content; the archaeological manifestation of the Greek solution to these problems.



## Chapter I: Gaining and Maintaining Power in Homeric Society

The first Greek tyrants were the same style of leader that had traditionally ruled the society depicted in the Homeric poems. These rulers, usually referred to as *basileus* and sometimes *anax*,<sup>37</sup> were wealthy and successful warriors who maintained order and defended their people in return for gifts and parcels of land. In order to prove that the Homeric leaders and the early tyrants used the same practices it will be necessary to examine and compare the means through which they took power. This chapter will discuss the means of taking power in Homeric society and show that these constituted a personal series of methods and arrangements.

It must first be noted that the word ‘king’ is deliberately not used in this chapter and Homeric ‘kingship’ is not the term used to refer to the phenomenon of Homeric leadership. This is because the word ‘king’ inevitably projects a form of monarchy resembling those of early modern Europe or of Eastern despotism onto Homeric society. In practice the Homeric *basileis* resemble neither of these institutions. The autocratic nature of the monarchs of early modern Europe, and the accompanying institutions of hereditary monarchy and divine right, were not found in Homeric society. Although some ceremony was observed around the *basileis*, such as special seats, sceptres, and portions of food and drink, this does not approach

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<sup>37</sup> These terms have been investigated by Carlier and Lévy. Both scholars generally agree that *anax* describes a leader with great power over subordinates, possibly equating to ‘master’, as one could also be *anax* of the household, and over one’s slaves or animals. This would also explain why *anax* was not used as a title for living men in later periods in Greece, but was applied to gods, as such a position over free men would have been unacceptable. Neither scholar regards *basileus* and *anax* as interchangeable. Their understanding of *basileus* differs slightly. Lévy interprets *basileus* as a first among equals within a political system, with an *anax* wielding the greater power. Carlier argues that *basileus* describes a hereditary position within a hierarchical system, with a man being more or less *basileus*. See Carlier (2006) 101-103. Cf. Levy (1985) 300-301, 313-314. In particular regarding *anax*: ‘Avec les progrès de la liberté dans les cités grecques cette domination, qui s’exerce de la même façon sur les hommes libres...et sur la domesticité, voire les animaux, ne paraîtra plus tolérable.’

the scale or elaboration of court ceremonies encountered, for example, in medieval Europe.

Before discussing the practices of the Homeric world and their significance for understanding the first Greek tyrants it will be necessary to summarise the recent scholarship concerning the dating of Homeric society. This scholarship dates the society depicted in Homer to the eighth and seventh centuries BC. This raises serious questions about the connection between the Homeric *basileis* and the appearance of the first tyrants in seventh-century Greece. It is also imperative that what is meant by 'Homeric society' is now explained. In this thesis 'Homeric society' refers to the Greek society that existed in the eighth century, which practised the various social norms depicted in the Homeric poems and lived among the archaeological phenomena described therein. The grounds for historicising the content of the Homeric poems are twofold. Firstly, this introduction will discuss the material phenomena in the poems that can be corroborated with archaeological evidence to date the poems. Secondly, it will summarise the anthropological view of the poems as a vehicle for the social practices the poems depict and the grounds for accepting these depictions as historical.

An effective and inclusive approach to the evidence for the dating of Homeric society has been adopted by those scholars opposed to the view that interprets the poems as an amalgam of social practices or a poetic construction.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> E.g. Andrewes (1967) 40: 'We may expect that the background of the story will reflect an earlier stage than the poet's own, but we need not expect that all features of it will derive from the same time.' Geddes (1984) 35, argued that Homer is unhistorical because one cannot identify the usual trappings of 'kingship' such as royal regalia or hereditary right to the throne: 'The Homeric world was lying alongside a world which understood kingship very well. The kings of Assyria and Egypt were set off from the rest of the people by ceremony and regalia, pomp and circumstance of every kind. In Homer the kings are not distinguished in any way at all from the rest of the community, not in the way they are addressed...nor the way they are approached, not in their clothes nor their seating arrangements...with no insignia, nothing.' On grounds such as this Geddes argued against a historical

Recently, convincing dates of the eighth and seventh centuries for the setting of Homeric society have been offered by Crielaard and van Wees. Their dates are corroborated by extensive use of archaeological evidence. Rather than ignoring or dismissing as late interpolations phenomena that contradicted their views the approaches of these scholars are characterised by their broad inclusivity of features and patterns of evidence from the Homeric poems. Rather than attempting to highlight individual artefacts within the poems and then locate them in the archaeological record, Crielaard reversed this methodology and identified securely dated archaeological phenomena and then searched for these in the Homeric poems. In doing so Crielaard avoided the pitfall of basing a date for Homeric society on artefacts that cannot be securely dated. Instead of focusing on individual artefacts that cannot be reliably assigned to a single period, such as the notorious boars' tusk helmet,<sup>39</sup> Crielaard's superior methodology draws attention to the fact that developments and innovations that certainly began in Greece in the eighth and seventh centuries can be easily and consistently identified throughout the Homeric poems. These include the adoption of an alphabet, an increase in the quantity and complexity of figurative, narrative visual art, an increase in overseas contacts and Greek settlement overseas, the appearance of stone altars and monumental temple architecture, and an increase in the religious use of votive offerings and cult statues. Each of these archaeological features will now be briefly summarised.

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Homeric society. Snodgrass (1974) 124-125, attempted to prove that Homeric society was not historical because the poems did not match the archaeological remains of the *Dark Age*. Snodgrass claimed that the depictions of wealth in Homer could not be taken seriously due to the supposed poverty of Dark Age Greece, which he assumes was the setting for the Homeric world.

<sup>39</sup> Crielaard (1995) 208, points out the flaws in this particular approach: 'This method focuses on individual artefacts instead of broader patterns; in addition, it relates undated and sometimes undatable artefacts occurring in the texts to archaeological objects, instead of comparing securely dated archaeological evidence to written information. It is not archaeology itself which is an unreliable tool for dating the setting of the epics: rather, the difficulty arises from the category of archaeological data which is employed and the way these data are used in relation to the textual evidence.'

Writing is mentioned certainly on one, possibly on two, occasions in the *Iliad*. Bellerophon carries a written message containing a request to execute him (*Il.* 6.167-169) and the Achaeans make marks on lots to determine who will fight Hektor (*Il.* 7.175). The earliest surviving examples of Greek script, probably derived from a Semitic alphabet, appear in the archaeological record in the form of graffiti on pottery finds from sites such as Lefkandi,<sup>40</sup> Athens, Rhodes and Pithekoussai,<sup>41</sup> and are dated to the eighth century. Considering the dates of these archaeological finds, and the logical conclusion that literacy reappeared in Greece about 800BC, becoming more widespread over the course of the eighth century, the *Iliad* must have been created at some point after this date.<sup>42</sup>

The production of figurative, narrative art intensified and became more sophisticated during the eighth century.<sup>43</sup> Archaeological finds from the eighth century, such as the examples of painted pottery attributed to the so-called Dipylon Master, depict large-scale dramatic scenes featuring combat, athletic competition and burial.<sup>44</sup> Particularly complex scenes also appear on metalwork from the late ninth and eighth centuries. Gold diadems retrieved from Eretrian cemeteries depict subjects such as combat and the hunting of lions with hounds. A particularly complex eighth century example discussed by Coldstream depicts a deer feeding her young and two lions tearing apart a man.<sup>45</sup> This artefact is of particular relevance when considered alongside the description of Odysseus' brooch, 'a hound held in his forepaws a dappled fawn, preying on it as it struggled; and all admired it, how, though they were golden, it preyed on the fawn and strangled it and the fawn

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<sup>40</sup> Popham, Sackett and Themelis (1980) 368-369.

<sup>41</sup> Coldstream (2003) 298-299.

<sup>42</sup> Crielaard (1995) 214.

<sup>43</sup> Crielaard (1995) 214-224; Whitley (1991b) 45-53.

<sup>44</sup> Coldstream (2003) 110.

<sup>45</sup> Coldstream (2003) 198. Whitley (1991b) 143-144.

struggled with his feet as he tried to escape him' (*Od.* 19.226-231). Further examples of such complex narrative, visual art can be easily identified within the Homeric poems. Herakles' belt (*Od.* 11.609-612), Agamemnon's corselet (*Il.* 11.26) and the shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18.478-607) all suggest that the poet's audience was familiar with examples of figurative and narrative art. Examples of figurative statuary in Homer, such as the cult statue of Athene at Troy, the fantastic examples on Phaiakia (*Od.* 7.91-94, 99-101) and the 'living' statues of Hephaistos (*Il.* 18.417-421), further suggest that the poet's audience were acquainted with sophisticated pieces of figurative statuary.

Although there is evidence for Greek trade with the East prior to the eighth century,<sup>46</sup> Greek contacts with the wider Mediterranean appear to become more regular during the eighth and seventh centuries.<sup>47</sup> Small luxury items exported from Egypt appear in eighth-century sites and tombs in Corinth, Athens and Sparta and even as far west as Pithekoussai and Etruria.<sup>48</sup> In the Homeric poems several Achaians make journeys to the East and to Egypt. Agamemnon has a guest-friend, Kinyras, who is a Cypriot (*Il.* 11.17-23) and Menelaos visits many regions and peoples. 'I wandered to Cyprus and Phoenicia, to the Egyptians, I reached the Aithiopians, Eremboi, Sidonians, and Libya' (*Od.* 4.83-85). Odysseus' herald, Eurybates, is also described as 'black-complexioned, wooly-haired' (*Od.* 19.246-247), suggesting that he originated from the African continent. The Egyptian city of Thebes is also mentioned in the epics (*Il.* 9.381-384, *Od.* 4.126-127)<sup>49</sup> and Achaian raids on the Egyptian coast are described by Odysseus (*Od.* 14.245-265, 17.423-

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<sup>46</sup> Popham, Sackett and Themelis (1980) 249-251.

<sup>47</sup> Crielaard (1995) 224.

<sup>48</sup> Boardman (1980) 111-113.

<sup>49</sup> Hainsworth (1993) 113, questions the Greek name for the Egyptian city of Thebes but not that the Greeks were aware of this region.

434). Pottery finds indicate that Pithekoussai, just off the coast of Italy, is the oldest known Greek settlement in the West, with Cumae on the Italian mainland and Naxos in Sicily following a few years later. Prior to the founding of permanent Greek settlements in Italy and Sicily Euboean pottery was already arriving in the form of trade goods.<sup>50</sup> Sicily is mentioned by Odysseus when he pretends to be Eperitos of Alybas (*Od.* 24.307), and Laertes keeps a female slave originally from Sicily (*Od.* 24.210-212). That Laertes was able to acquire a Sicilian slave, and that the suitors threatened to sell Odysseus to the Sicels (*Od.* 20.382-383), matches the archaeological evidence that trade occurred between Greece and Sicily in the eighth and seventh centuries, and suggests that the poet's audience was aware of this region.<sup>51</sup>

The Phoenicians were also active in this period and expanded their activities and settlements in the western Mediterranean in the ninth and eighth centuries,<sup>52</sup> establishing settlements in Sicily, North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. Phoenician contact with the Greeks appears in the archaeological record in the form of luxury items deposited in ninth and eighth-century graves at sites such as Lefkandi, the Kerameikos of Athens, and on the islands of Crete and Cos.<sup>53</sup> The presence of the Phoenicians in the Mediterranean and their contact with the Greeks is reflected in the poems. Phoenician craftsmen (*Il.* 23.741-745) and traders (*Od.* 14.287-297, 15.415-16) are mentioned and some Phoenician women brought from Sidon (*Il.* 6.289-292). Another Phoenician woman, a slave, lives in the house of Eumaios' father (*Od.* 15.417-419). Menelaos receives a silver bowl as a gift from Phaidimos of Sidon (*Od.* 4.615-619, 15.115-119). These passages not only suggest a familiarity with these

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<sup>50</sup> Boardman (1980) 165-169.

<sup>51</sup> Crielaard (1995) 232.

<sup>52</sup> Coldstream (1982) 261.

<sup>53</sup> Coldstream (1982) 263-264.

regions but also a familiarity with the concept of travel between them, the establishment of social contacts and the movement of goods.

The earliest Greek overseas settlement is Pithekoussai, which was probably founded in the first half of the eighth century, with others such as Cumae and Naxos, and Catane and Syracuse in Sicily following shortly after.<sup>54</sup> The process of settling overseas was clearly familiar to the audience of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The son of Herakles, Tlepolemos, is forced to found a new community in Rhodes. ‘Now when Tlepolemos was grown in the strong-built mansion, he struck to death his own father’s beloved uncle...At once he put ships together and assembled a host of people and went fugitive over the sea, since the others threatened, the rest of the sons and the grandsons of the strength of Herakles. And he came to Rhodes a wanderer, a man of misfortune, and they settled there in triple division by tribes’ (*Il.* 2.661-668). Odysseus admires a nearby island with the eye of a man who knows where to establish a settlement. Not only does he note the fertile soil (*Od.* 9.131-135) and freshwater springs (*Od.* 9.140-141), but also the fine harbour (*Od.* 9.135-139). Nausithoös took the Phaiakians to Scheria and performed all the functions of an *oikist*, a formal leader and founder of a settlement. ‘From here godlike Nausithoös had removed and led a migration, and settled in Scheria, far away from men who eat bread, and driven a wall about the city, and built the houses, and made the temples of the gods, and allotted the holdings’ (*Od.* 6.6-10). This description even suggests a foundation built according to formal plans and a premeditated design. It is not unreasonable to state that the poet’s audience appears to have been familiar with the practice of settling overseas and that the city of the Phaiakians contains the same features, as will be shown, as an eighth or seventh-century Greek settlement.

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<sup>54</sup> Boardman (1980) 165; Crielaard (1995) 236.

Stone altars and free-standing monumental temples become a feature of Greek religion in the eighth century. Thucydides writes that an altar to Apollo Archegetes was built by the Greeks who founded Naxos (in 734),<sup>55</sup> and an altar to Athene was built by the founders of Syracuse (Thuc. 6.3).<sup>56</sup> A large number of stone altars are encountered in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Apollo's altar on Delos is briefly mentioned (*Od.* 6.161), the Phaiakians sacrifice on an altar to Poseidon (*Od.* 13.187), there is an altar to the Nymphs on Ithaka at which travellers offer sacrifice (*Od.* 17.210-211) and Aigisthos burns offerings on the altars of the gods at Mycenae (*Od.* 3.273). The Achaians sacrifice around an altar to Apollo, called *eudmetos* or 'well-built' (*Il.* 1.440, 448) and burnt offerings are made at the altar of Zeus at Troy (*Il.* 4.48). Although monumental temples are fewer in number they still appear in the epics. A temple to Athene, housing the image of the goddess, is found in Troy (*Il.* 6.88). Apollo's priest, Chryses, builds a temple of Apollo and receives the god's favour as a result (*Il.* 1.39). There is a temple of Athene at Athens (*Il.* 2.549) and a temple of Apollo at Troy (*Il.* 5.446). Odysseus' crew promise a temple to the sun god to atone for destroying his cattle (*Od.* 12.346). There are a number of temples in Phaiakia including a temple to Poseidon (*Od.* 6.10). Building these was one of the first acts of Nausithoös on founding the city. The archaeological record also indicates an increase in the use and quality of cult statues and of votive offerings in religious practice in the eighth century.<sup>57</sup> In the epics, a cult statue of Athene is kept in her temple in Troy to which the Trojan women make an offering of a *peplos* (*Il.* 6.269-273, 279-303). Odysseus makes an offering of the spoils from Dolon's body to Athene (*Il.* 10.462-463) and Aigisthos made votive offerings to the gods. '[Aigisthos] hung up many dedications, gold, and things woven' (*Od.* 3.274). The

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<sup>55</sup> Coldstream (2003) 321.

<sup>56</sup> Coldstream (2003) 234.

<sup>57</sup> Crielaard (1995) 262.



temple of Athene at Athens is called 'rich' or 'wealthy' (*Il.* 2.549) and the Achaians bring *dora* (gifts) to Poseidon at Helike and Aigai (*Il.* 8.203). The practice of making votive offerings is clearly commonplace in the society depicted in the Homeric poems. As this summary has shown, Crielaard's study consolidates the evidence from the Homeric epics and archaeology and that evidence overwhelmingly presents a date of the late eighth or the early seventh century for Homeric society.<sup>58</sup>

A major feature of the Homeric world not covered comprehensively by Crielaard, warfare and military equipment, has been discussed at length by van Wees. Van Wees has argued forcefully that the depictions of Homeric combat and the equipment of the warriors are consistently portrayed and datable to one specific period, that is, to the eighth and seventh centuries.<sup>59</sup> Van Wees' methodology is similar to that of Crielaard and includes a large body of evidence comprising archaeology, lyric poetry, and the Homeric epics.<sup>60</sup> Following on from scholars such as Latacz, van Wees accepts the Homeric portrayal of combat as a serious and consistent depiction of warfare. Unlike Latacz, however, van Wees defines Homeric combat as a primitive style of combat not inconsistent with the depictions of warriors and combat in Late-Geometric and seventh-century vase paintings. As van Wees states, securely dated archaeological artefacts, such as the Chigi Vase, contain depictions that recall the style of combat and the military equipment described in Homer. The warriors depicted on this vase, for example, are, unlike the Classical

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<sup>58</sup> Crielaard (1995) 273-274.

<sup>59</sup> van Wees (1994b) 131.

<sup>60</sup> van Wees (1994a) 2: 'Again, a long oral tradition might well produce confused images, but we simply do not know enough about the nature of the Greek epic tradition to deny a priori that it could produce a consistent picture. It is, moreover, dangerous not to look for consistency, because it allows too much scholarly licence: if one assumes that a text is inconsistent, one can simply select evidence to suit one's purposes, and discard anything that does not fit. For methodological reasons, therefore, we should in this respect treat the *Iliad* as we would any other source, and attempt to reconstruct from it a meaningful, coherent picture, based, if possible, on all the evidence. Inconsistencies should not be taken for granted, but admitted only when there are compelling reasons to do so.'

hoplite, equipped with two spears. The Homeric warrior bears a crest of horsehair on his helmet and wears a bell-corselet, as do those on the Chigi Vase, and unlike those of the Mycenaean period or the Dark Ages.<sup>61</sup> Van Wees addressed the question of the bronze arms of the Homeric warriors by stating that these need not be taken as deliberate archaization as bronze is worn alongside gold and tin (*Il.* 8.193, 18.6.11-12, 21.592), metals not as suitable for combat as iron or even bronze.<sup>62</sup> Van Wees points out that these metals recall the precious dedications made to the gods and are probably mentioned by the poet to glorify the heroes who are already made impossibly bigger, stronger and faster than normal men.<sup>63</sup> Iron is of course present in the epics as well as bronze, in the form of weaponry, tools, and as a metaphor. An expression in the *Odyssey* even suggests that weaponry was commonly forged from iron (*Od.* 16.294, 19.13). Van Wees' interpretation of the evidence largely points to an early seventh-century date for the style of combat and the military equipment depicted in the poems.<sup>64</sup>

The fact that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the products of an oral tradition does not necessarily pose a problem for their use as historical evidence.<sup>65</sup> As Morris notes, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* should be viewed partly from an anthropological perspective that recognises the connection between the poems and the society that produced them.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps the most important point highlighted by Morris' argument is that oral poetry does not preserve outdated social institutions, but reflects those

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<sup>61</sup> van Wees (1994b) 139: 'In short, Homeric shields and the Homeric combination of twin and single spears, as reconstructed here, have seventh century Greek counter-parts; the other items of standard Homeric equipment are first encountered either in the Mycenaean age or in the later eighth century, but are in general use during the seventh century as well. The obvious conclusion would seem to be that the heroes are equipped with a more glamorous and literally larger than life version of seventh century arms and armour.'

<sup>62</sup> The uselessness of tin is pointed out by Richardson (1993) 103.

<sup>63</sup> van Wees (1994b) 134.

<sup>64</sup> van Wees (1994b) 139.

<sup>65</sup> Lord (1960) 45, 141-147.

<sup>66</sup> Morris (1986) 82.

that are contemporary with the poet's audience.<sup>67</sup> The evidence collected by individuals such as Lord and Ong strongly suggests that the fluid and ever-changing nature of oral poetry is incapable of preserving an amalgamation of 'dead' social norms, institutions and practices, as they would have no relevance to an audience who would be unable to comprehend them.<sup>68</sup> Although this argument largely focuses on the negative aspects of oral poetry, that is, what oral poetry does *not* record, the positive side of this argument is that oral poetry will generally reflect the social practices of the current audience.<sup>69</sup> This is evidenced by the fact that oral poetry serves a number of practical functions for the community who provide the audience.<sup>70</sup> Finnegan writes that oral poetry 'frequently serves to uphold the *status quo*'<sup>71</sup> but it also reinforces, and teaches, the social norms and practices accepted by the audience. In the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* there are a number of recognisable social norms clearly operating within the society depicted in the poems, such as a concept of private property, fair judgement, guest-friendship and slave ownership. Considering the evidence regarding the dating of Homeric society and the firmly

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<sup>67</sup> Morris (1986) 87: 'The evidence is heavily set against the long-term transmission of dead institutions within a tradition of constantly re-created oral poetry. It would perhaps be an exaggeration to say that non-literate societies float in a kind of perpetual present, but it does seem to be the case that ideas that are no longer relevant to the present rapidly disappear from oral traditions.' See also Finnegan (1977) 244: 'It seems obvious that the content and context of literature, and the way literary activity is organised are closely correlated with the institutions of the society in which it is situated. This emerges from any consideration of function and contexts, for these relate to specific social groupings in any society, and to its social occasions and activities.'

<sup>68</sup> Lord (1960) 26-29. See also Parry (1933) 377: 'Its proper study [of heroic poetry] is even more anthropological and historical, and what Doughty tells us about cattle-lifting among the Bedouins is more enlightening, if we are reading Nestor's tale of a cattle raid into Elis, than is the mere knowledge that the theme occurs elsewhere in ancient poetry.' See also Ong (1982) 46: 'By contrast with literate societies, oral societies can be characterized as homeostatic. That is to say, oral societies live very much in a present which keeps itself in equilibrium or homeostasis by sloughing off memories which no longer have present relevance.'

<sup>69</sup> Vansina (1985) 94: 'They are significant to members of the communities in which they are told. Otherwise they would not be communicated at all. Would the social pressure not alter the contents of a message?'

<sup>70</sup> Vansina (1985) 100: 'Every traditional message has a particular purpose and fulfils a particular function, otherwise it would not survive. The significance of its content in relation to community or society at large is what I call a function.'

<sup>71</sup> Finnegan (1977) 242.

established anthropological significance of oral poetry, the Homeric epics can and should be used to study the social practices of the period between 750-650 BC.

The archaeological and anthropological evidence discussed above leaves little room for anachronisms in the Homeric poems. This is not to say that there are absolutely no anachronisms whatsoever or any scope for investigating post eighth-century insertions or later corruptions of the text. It can, however, be confidently asserted that the material culture presented in the poems is that of the eighth century. Furthermore, the conspicuous absence of Archaic and Classical *polis* institutions such as boards of officials, military officials assigned by rotation and magistrates selected by lot, suggests that the poems represent a stage of Greek society prior to c.650 BC. The work of scholars such as Lord, Parry and Vansina has promoted the idea that the oral tradition the poems represent was unlikely to have recorded practices alien to that society. Furthermore, the consistency with which social institutions such as slavery and religious dedication are presented by the poems suggests a representation of a single period of Greek history rather than an amalgam of unrelated customs or chronologically separate periods.

## I

Power in Homeric society<sup>72</sup> has been thought to originate from several different sources. Nilsson argued that Homeric leaders held their lands from the paramount

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<sup>72</sup> A brief summary of the movement to see Homer as post Bronze Age can be found in Bennet (1997) 511-534. Morris (1986) 81-138, generally accepting the epics as consistent and reflecting the poet's own age, has concluded that the poems are essentially an attempt by the aristocrats of the eighth century to manipulate a heroic ideology to legitimise their position.

*basileus*, Agamemnon, and being his vassals owed him military service.<sup>73</sup> This feudal system of obligation has not found favour with scholars since the 1930s. Finley then stated that power could be traced to bands of armed retainers maintained directly by the individual households of *basileis* such as Agamemnon, Nestor and Odysseus.<sup>74</sup> This theory has been challenged by van Wees on several occasions, for example, in his examination of the practice of feasting in Homer. Van Wees argued that these events were characterised by ‘equality, not dependence’ and highlighted the social importance of feasting.<sup>75</sup> Van Wees has since suggested, in opposition to Finley’s theory of dependent bands of retainers, that Homeric leaders occupied ‘a formal, public, hereditary position’<sup>76</sup> and has reviewed certain practices such as gift-giving, guest-friendship and feasting as means of forging obligations and alliances between Homeric leaders and lower ranking individuals.<sup>77</sup> In battle, however, van Wees has concluded that authority came from ‘a personal relation to those who follow, rather than being derived from...an institutionalised hierarchy of command.’<sup>78</sup> Raaflaub has cautiously suggested that the ‘paramount *basileus* holds an inherited, though precarious, position of pre-eminence’.<sup>79</sup> The contrasts within van Wees’ and Raaflaub’s interpretations are difficult to reconcile and perhaps not

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<sup>73</sup> Nilsson (1933) 158-159, 229-235: ‘The power of the king was especially based on this retinue, and the more retainers his wealth permitted him to entertain, the greater was his power.’ Nilsson also believed that substantial elements of the Homeric poems referred to the Mycenaean period.

<sup>74</sup> Finley (1977) 58-59.

<sup>75</sup> van Wees (1995) 172. This is not to say that personal retainers, sometimes referred to as *therapontes*, do not exist in the epics. Phoinix, Patroklos, Theoklymenos and Philoitios could be examples of this phenomenon. With the exception of Philoitios all are exiles that have been taken in by a wealthy household (*Il.* 9.478-491, 23.85-90. *Od.* 15.272-278). The services of these men are clearly valued but their numbers are extremely small. In the epics only one or two are encountered serving a single man. Therefore they could never, as Finley implies, amount to bands of warriors large enough to drastically increase the military might of their leader.

<sup>76</sup> van Wees (1992) 32-35, cites the existence of *demioergoi* (public workers), meals eaten at public expense and the nature of booty distribution as evidence.

<sup>77</sup> E.g. van Wees (1992; 1995). For other examinations of Homeric social practices see Donlan (1982; 2007).

<sup>78</sup> van Wees (1986) 303.

<sup>79</sup> Raaflaub (1993) 50.

entirely satisfactory explanations.<sup>80</sup> Raaflaub's work in particular raises questions about other paths to power and fails to address the problem of partible inheritance. It will be shown in this chapter that the transfer of wealth had serious consequences for the pursuit of power in Homeric society. Ulf has opposed the theory of inherited status and cited personal achievement as the primary means of gaining status.<sup>81</sup> Ulf, being largely concerned with military organisation and the role of the *basileus*, did not review social practices such as marriage and the institution of slavery as alternative means of gaining and maintaining power. The above scholars, despite their different conclusions, have been largely concerned with examining the structure of 'government' in Homer, and the extent and nature of the Homeric leader's authority. Generally little space has been devoted to discussing how men like Odysseus and Achilles came to power in the first place. This chapter will show that power was achieved through military success and sustained by private wealth and engaging with significant social practices. The approach of this chapter is distinct as it opposes the older theories of a quasi-feudal Homeric society, suggests an alternative means of taking power in place of inherited status, and does not attempt to impose a formal institution of kingship on Homeric Greece.

This chapter will now examine the means by which the Homeric leaders took and held power in their society. This will be discussed in the following sections. Part II will discuss the role of warfare in sustaining and enhancing the status of a Homeric leader as well as providing a source of wealth and slave labour. It will also review the use of violence in general to maintain dominance. Part III will review the

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<sup>80</sup> The contrast between public position and private authority (van Wees) and between inherited power and a perilous position within society (Raaflaub).

<sup>81</sup> Ulf (1990) 117: 'Doch jede Situation, die den Beweis individueller Fähigkeiten verlangt - und solche sind von der ersten Phase der Erwachsenenzeit an gegeben -, führt zur realistischen Beurteilung einer Person und damit gleichzeitig auch zu ihrer realistischen Einstufung in der sozialen Hierarchie zurück.'

extent of slave ownership among the *basileis*. Part IV will discuss the following social practices: feasting, religious practice, marriage alliances between powerful families, *xenoi*, the significance of gift-giving and largesse, the sponsoring of athletic competition, and protection payments. It will illustrate the reliance of these practices on the surplus produce of slave labour and show that power in Homeric society was neither inherited nor awarded through a recognised public office.

## II

Homeric warfare has been discussed by a large number of scholars and much of this scholarship has been concerned with establishing the nature of warfare in this period: the tactics, equipment and participants.<sup>82</sup> Though this debate is not the primary concern of this chapter, the role of the *basileus* in war will be discussed as the role of the warrior in Homeric combat had implications for his position in society.

The poet often depicts the *basileus* fighting among the foremost fighters in the wider setting of massed combat. The *basileis* were expected to take up their position at the front of their followers and from there they hurled missiles and engaged in hand-to-hand combat, retiring to the rear when they were injured, tired, or simply afraid. The poet exhorts the heroes to fight *meta protoisin* (*Il.* 4.341,

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<sup>82</sup> The scholarly view of warfare in the epics has changed drastically in the last fifty years. Finley (1956) held that only aristocrats made any meaningful contribution on the battlefield. A ground-breaking study was published by Latacz which argued that the mass of warriors decided the outcome of Homeric battles, not duels between heroic champions, (1977) 45: 'Der allgemein verbreitete Eindruck fachkundiger wie fachfremder Homerleser, die zur Entstehungszeit der *Ilias* vorherrschende Kampfweise sei der ritterliche Einzelkampf gewesen, ist, wie im Folgenden gezeigt werden soll, das Ergebnis einer perspektivischen Verzerrung der Realität'. In the same study Latacz also argued for the presence of hoplite infantry tactics in Homer. As noted by Snodgrass (2013) 86: 'For Latacz and for many of his converts, not only was there a coherent *Kampfdarstellung* of massed battles, but it was historically a realistic one, rather than some kind of poetic construction; not only was it real, but it was based on a type of phalanx formation familiar from historical times...' Raaflaub (1997) assigned a significant role in warfare to non-elites and van Wees (1988, 1994a, 1994b, 1997) has taken this further and dated 'mass-participation' in Greek warfare to the pre-Achaic period, identifying this phenomenon in Homer.

12.315, 321, 13.270), or talks of the heroes standing *eni promachois* (*Il.* 4.253). The greatest warriors, such as Hektor (*Il.* 4.505, 16.588), Agamemnon (*Il.* 11.188, 203), and Nestor in his youth, are found among the *promachoi* (*Il.* 11.744). If a hero wishes to hurl a missile at the enemy he takes his place among the *promachoi* or strides through them to the front, as does Odysseus when he kills Democoon (*Il.* 4.495).<sup>83</sup> When Hektor wishes to find three Trojan leaders, Deiphobos, Helenus and Asius, he searches for them first among the *promachoi*, clearly expecting to find them there (*Il.* 13.760). Echeolus is described as *esthlon eni promachois* before being killed by Antilochus (*Il.* 4.458). When two leaders, such as Aeneas and Achilles, engage in combat, they advance against each other through the *promachoi* (*Il.* 20.111). Idomeneus states that a brave man, unlike a coward, will be found pressing forward among the *promachoi* (*Il.* 13.291). When Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, wishes to boast of his skills to Eurymachus he claims that, should he regain his arms and armour, he would certainly be found among the *promachoi* (*Od.* 18.379). Some particularly brave warriors dash out beyond the *promachoi*, as does Menelaus when he kills Peisander, returning to the *promachoi* once he had stripped off Peisander's armour (*Il.* 13.642). Some do not return safely to their comrades but are killed or wounded as they turn their backs on the enemy (*Il.* 15.342). Homeric leaders were clearly expected to take their place conspicuously at the front of their men, exposing themselves to danger, to push forward among the *promachoi*, and inflict as much damage as they could to the enemy. An interesting comparison can be made between how a Homeric warrior was expected to behave and why he was praised, and Herodotus' later description of the warriors who fought at Plataea at the close of the Archaic period. This suggests a change occurred in the attitudes of the

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<sup>83</sup> van Wees (1994a) 7: 'The *promachoi* are simply that section of the mass which at any given moment is closest to the enemy, and engaged in actual combat, while the 'multitude' are those who at that particular moment are keeping their distance from the fight.'



community between c.700 and 479, and will serve to highlight the significance of Homeric norms in combat. The manner in which a praiseworthy Homeric warrior was expected to fight should offer a stark contrast with the praiseworthy warriors of Herodotus. Agamemnon gives an impression of an ideal Homeric warrior when he attempts to shame Diomedes into fighting the Trojans by recalling the prowess of Tydeus, his father. 'Such was never Tydeus' way, to lurk in the background, but to fight the enemy far ahead of his own companions' (*Il.* 4.372-373). Brave Homeric warriors *choose* to step forward from the *promachoi* when they spot an opportunity for glory or spy an enemy who is particularly hateful to them, as when Menelaos spots Paris among the Trojans (*Il.* 3.21-37). They could also choose to behave in the opposite manner, falling back through their men when injured or cowering among them in fear (*Il.* 3.30-37). The distribution of awards at Plataea, recorded by Herodotus, offers a contrast with the behaviour of the Homeric warrior. The man who was not formally recognised for valour, Aristodemus, rushed out alone and hurled himself against the Persians (Hdt. 9.71-72). Herodotus also tells the story of an individual called Sophanes who physically anchored himself to the ground, presenting himself as an immovable obstacle to the enemy. Although probably apocryphal, Herodotus nevertheless thought the story worth retelling, and it is remarkable that Sophanes had essentially rendered himself incapable of behaving like a Homeric warrior on the battlefield (Hdt. 9.74-75). Sophanes was physically unable to behave like the Homeric warrior who returns home carrying the bloody spoils of the man he has killed, having chosen to push his way to the front and fight among the *promachoi* (*Il.* 6.480-481). Although the Greeks of Herodotus' time honoured the man who kept his place and displayed discipline as well as courage,

Homeric society clearly valued the brave warrior who jostled to the front and enthusiastically attacked the enemy.

Homeric leaders went into battle equipped according to their means and personal preferences, using chariots to move to or from combat.<sup>84</sup> These vehicles were a convenient mode of battlefield transport for flight or pursuit and were powerful symbols of wealth and prestige.<sup>85</sup> Although the presence of these vehicles has been treated sceptically by several scholars, their importance as markers of wealth and status should not be underestimated. Care is taken over the chariot in which Telemachus and Peisistratos arrive at the house of Menelaos (*Od.* 4.39-43). Asius is clearly differentiated from the dismounted Trojans by his chariot, which he insists on riding into the confined space of the Achaian camp as it will make him *agallomenos* (*Il.* 12.113). The gods themselves also make chariots their vehicles (*Il.* 8.432-435), and Hektor offers a chariot and horses as a reward for a particularly dangerous task (*Il.* 10.303-307). So precious are the horses and chariots that warriors will sleep hard by them when forced to camp beyond the protection of walls (*Il.* 10.473-475), and will generally not plunge into combat and risk losing their horses and chariots, but have them held some distance behind. Chariots in Homeric society were clearly as much an expression of wealth and status as they were a military tool. Wealthy individuals were under pressure to not only acquire and ride these vehicles

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<sup>84</sup> van Wees (1994a) 13.

<sup>85</sup> Finley's (1956) 142, dismissal of 'the nonsense we read in the poems about military chariots' is particularly unhelpful here. Greenhalgh (1973) 7, also concluded that 'the Homeric poems reveal no conception of the proper tactical role of massed chariotry...' This view has been vigorously challenged by van Wees (1994b) 140: 'If armed men paraded on chariots, then it is likely that chariots were used in a military context, and if a military use is consistently and plausibly portrayed in poetry and painting, it would seem perverse to deny its historicity.' See also van Wees (1994a) 12: 'If the heroes do not use chariots in the theoretically most effective way, it is because their fighting habits are shaped by social, cultural, and economic conditions. The cultural pressure to attain prestige drives men to acquire chariots and use them even in battle; the social fact that these men are leaders forces them to use their chariots singly, rather than in battalions; and the economic fact that they can ill afford to lose their horses makes them employ their chariots with great caution. If Mycenaean, Egyptians, or Hittites used chariots differently, that is because their societies were different.'

to war, but to do so in the most conspicuous manner they could. This chapter will now investigate the social and personal consequences of a *basileus*' military success. Warfare gave the *basileis* opportunities to justify and increase their status and to seize people as slaves and accumulate large amounts of wealth. The use of violence at times when open warfare is not occurring will also be investigated. This phenomenon must also be discussed as a Homeric leader resorted to violence to maintain his dominance remarkably quickly and was prepared to use deadly force to maintain order, encourage obedience, or take revenge.

Homeric leaders could validate their power and status by leading their communities in war, by displaying their prowess and courage on the battlefield, and by fighting on behalf of their people as well as for their private interests.<sup>86</sup> Sarpedon asks a rhetorical question of Glaukos, 'why is it you and I are honoured before others with pride of place, the choice meats and the filled wine cups in Lykia...?' (*Il.* 12.310-312). He answers his own question by stating that it is 'since indeed there is strength and valour in them, since they fight in the forefront of the Lykians' (*Il.* 12.320-321).<sup>87</sup> Later, the Trojans are stunned with grief at the death of Sarpedon, although he was a foreigner, because 'he was the best of them all in battle always' (*Il.* 16.552). The crucial reason why the Trojans mourn Sarpedon is that he was a mighty warrior, bringing many followers with him, and therefore was a great asset to their cause.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, once Odysseus has killed the suitors he remarks that 'we have killed what held the city together, the finest young men in Ithaka' (*Od.* 23.121-

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<sup>86</sup> The significance of participation in warfare to increase social standing is also acknowledged by McGlew (1989) 287: 'Yet heroes such as Aeneas, who are not bound to the war through family ties or personal destiny, fight to gain the conspicuous recognition that war alone offers.'

<sup>87</sup> For a brief analysis of these lines see Adkins (1997) 700. The translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* used throughout are those of Lattimore.

<sup>88</sup> For the poetic technique of reflecting a leader's strength in the number and quality of his followers, see van Wees (1988) 21-22.

122).<sup>89</sup> These are presumably the same men who, at the approach of raiders or pirates, came out and fought ‘for the sake of their city and women’ (*Od.* 11.403, 24.113). When Hektor wishes to mock Diomedes for retreating he taunts him by saying that ‘beyond others the fast-mounted Danaans honoured you with pride of place, the choice meats and the filled wine-cups. But now they will disgrace you, who are no better than a woman’ (*Il.* 8.160-163). Hektor claims that Diomedes’ unwillingness to stand and fight renders him undeserving of the privileges and status he had previously earned in battle.<sup>90</sup> He links military success with privilege, honour and gifts, and cowardice with shame. Hektor himself decides to enter battle despite the protests of Andromache, because ‘I would feel deep shame before the Trojans...if like a coward I were to shrink aside from the fighting’ (*Il.* 6.441-443).<sup>91</sup> So far, these passages suggest that the qualifications for leadership in Homeric society were prowess and courage in war. This is demonstrated further by Hektor’s criticism of Paris when he shrinks from fighting Menelaos. Hektor believes they will now be mocked by the Achaians because Paris has failed to meet the criteria of a war-leader, having ‘no strength in your heart, no courage’ (*Il.* 3.45). Similar criticisms are made of Agamemnon by Achilles, who, in his fury, questions Agamemnon’s courage and willingness to participate in combat (*Il.* 1.225-228). In return for participating in combat and fighting courageously and skilfully, a Homeric leader received favours, honour, gifts and privileges. The epics make this clear through explicit justifications

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<sup>89</sup>This is supported by Adkins (1982) 309: ‘In slaying the suitors Odysseus has not imposed a judicial penalty on them. He has declared war on them and in doing so has destroyed “the bulwark of the polis, the *aristoi* of the youths in Ithaca.” Odysseus and his like were termed *agathos*, and given *time*, originally because they were deemed most effective in attaining the necessary goal of security for the community. To manifest or reassert his *arete* and regain his *time*, Odysseus has diminished the community’s ability to defend itself successfully, as in their own way did Hector and - deliberately - Achilles.’

<sup>90</sup> This is, to some extent, in agreement with Adkins (1971) 14, who states that, for Diomedes, ‘the demand of society is simple: succeed, do not retreat’.

<sup>91</sup> For a discussion of ‘shame’ in Homeric society and an analysis of *aidos* and *sebas*, see Hooker (1987). See also van Wees (1992) 67-69. For a discussion of the *basileus* and his sense of responsibility for the community see Haubold (2000) 29-30.

of status, like that of Sarpedon, and the harsh criticism of those who fail to behave in accordance with their rank and the expectations of their friends and followers.<sup>92</sup>

As well as earning prestige and status war also allowed a successful warrior to carry off a large amount of plundered wealth. This included livestock, arms and armour, precious metals, cloth and slaves. Any of these items, regardless of what form they took, could be redistributed to friends and followers.<sup>93</sup> Some items of plunder were given to the leader of the enterprise or to a more powerful *basileus*. Achilles states that the cities captured by the Achaians during the war against Troy were immediately plundered (*Il.* 1.123-129), although he then complains to Agamemnon that he is ‘minded no longer to stay here dishonoured and pile up your wealth and your luxury’ (*Il.* 1.170-171). Achilles makes it clear that the pursuit of plunder was an immediate concern and that a part of the booty was consistently delivered to Agamemnon. A *basileus* in a paramount position could profit from conflict by simply receiving a portion of the spoil from lesser *basileis*. Achilles clearly regards war and looting as inseparable. ‘But I say that I have stormed from my ships twelve cities of men, and by land eleven more through the generous Troad. From all these we took forth treasures, goodly and numerous...’ (*Il.* 9.328-330). Odysseus, attempting to reconcile Achilles with Agamemnon, promises that Achilles may ‘go to your ship and load it as deep as you please with gold and bronze, when we Achaians divide the war spoils’ (*Il.* 9.279-280). A Homeric leader could suddenly find himself in possession of an extremely large amount of movable wealth after a successful expedition.

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<sup>92</sup> Although Nilsson (1933) 226-227 believed that the need for a war-leader produced Homeric ‘kingship’, he defines the rank itself as something divinely protected and essentially a hereditary office.

<sup>93</sup> van Wees (1992) 87.

As well as looting captured settlements stripping the arms and armour from a dead enemy is a very common occurrence in the *Iliad*. Hektor offers half the spoils from Patroklos' body to the man who drags him back to the Trojan lines (*Il.* 17.229-231). Diomedes is wounded by Paris when he is distracted stripping the armour from Agastrophos (*Il.* 11.368-378), and when Idomeneus kills Phaistos his followers immediately set about removing Phaistos' armour (*Il.* 5.48). Many other slain enemies are despoiled of their equipment almost instantly after death.<sup>94</sup> Achilles gives a corselet he took from the body of Asteropaios to Eumelos (*Il.* 23.560-563), showing that these items were not necessarily hoarded but could be passed on to friends, companions and followers, illustrating the usefulness of plunder in the practice of gift-giving.

Although booty could be obtained as a by-product of war, organising violent raids specifically to acquire plunder appears to have been a very common exercise at this time.<sup>95</sup> The need to acquire wealth and the importance of military success is reflected in this practice. Odysseus recalls how he and his men sacked the city of the Kikonians, for no obvious purpose other than to acquire booty (*Od.* 9.39-43). He later tells the false tale of travelling to Egypt with the explicit intention of raiding and seizing goods (*Od.* 17.428-434). Nestor describes his victory over the Eleians in terms of the booty he acquired, 'fifty herds of oxen, as many sheepflocks, as many droves of pigs, and again as many wide-ranging goatflocks, and a hundred and fifty brown horses...with foals following underneath' (*Il.* 11.677-680). The plunder is distributed among the Pylians, although Neleus, father of Nestor, takes the biggest

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<sup>94</sup> *Il.* 5.161-165, 13.201-202, 13.640-641, 15.343, 15.518, 16.782, 17.125-126

<sup>95</sup> This is supported by Donlan (1999) 4, who understands the rich man and the successful warrior/raider as an inseparable unit: 'As a general rule...one grew rich, stayed rich or became richer, by fighting; the successful warrior was a wealthy man, and...a rich man was a successful warrior.' On the presence of this phenomenon in Archaic Attica see Harris (2002) 427-428.

share. Odysseus, confronted with the ghost of Agamemnon and ignorant of Klytemnestra's treachery, asks if Agamemnon was killed while plundering livestock (*Od.* 11.401-403). The deceased Agamemnon also asks the shades of the slain suitors how they died. He asks if they drowned at sea, or 'did men embattled destroy you as you tried to cut out cattle and fleecy sheep from their holdings, or fighting against them, for the sake of their city and women?' (*Od.* 24.106-113). It is worthy of note that Odysseus and Agamemnon expected the ghosts they met to have been killed on a raid for booty. Both men are depicted considering death on a raid to be the most likely fate of recently deceased men. This indicates how widespread and frequent the practice must have been, and that men termed as *basileis* regularly took part in it. It is also striking that Agamemnon, the most famed and powerful of all *basileis*, must have personally engaged in raiding and thievery often enough to make Odysseus think it most likely that he was killed doing it. Donlan has suggested that the rich presents given to Odysseus by Maron at Ismaros were protection money to secure his safety while Odysseus' men looted the nearby city of the Kikonians (*Od.* 9.194-204).<sup>96</sup> If this is the case then extortion under threat of violence could also yield valuable profits for a Homeric leader.

The collecting of spoil as a route to status and power in Homeric society is summarised by one of Odysseus' false tales. Odysseus tells the story of his rise to power on Crete through successful raiding and the subsequent accumulation of plunder. It is made explicit that military success enabled him, a bastard son with an unimpressive inheritance, to arrange a favourable marriage to a woman from a wealthy and influential family. 'But I took for myself a wife from people with many possessions, because of my courage, for I was no contemptible man, not one who

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<sup>96</sup> Donlan (1989) 9.

fled from the fighting' (*Od.* 14.211-213).<sup>97</sup> The 'Cretan' Odysseus soon becomes a figure of importance in his community. 'I was nine times a leader of men and went in fast-faring vessels against outland men, and much substance came my way, and from this I took out an abundance of things, but much I allotted again, and soon my house grew greater, and from that time on I went among the Cretans as one feared and respected' (*Od.* 14.229-234). Leading and participating in successful raids clearly resulted in an increase in wealth and prestige as well as wider recognition of a man's fighting abilities.

Despite the importance of raiding as a means of attaining wealth it is necessary to state that the Homeric poems do not depict property as something that merely belongs to the man strong enough to seize it. Ownership of private property, and an individual's rights over his property, is a concept that clearly exists in Homer. Several passages in the poems make this quite explicit.<sup>98</sup> Telemachus, for example, is distressed that the suitors are destroying his property, not that they are attempting to usurp an abstract office such as that of king. Telemachus makes this clear when he declares his intention of summoning an assembly to the suitors. 'But if you decide it is more profitable and better to go on, eating up one man's livelihood, without payment, then spoil my house. I will cry out to the gods everlasting in the hope that Zeus might somehow grant a reversal of fortunes' (*Od.* 1.376-379). Telemachus then firmly states his determination to enjoy his own property. 'But I will be the *anax* over my own household and my slaves, whom the great Odysseus won by force for me' (*Od.* 1.397-398). Telemachus appeals to the gods hoping they will punish the

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<sup>97</sup> This conclusion is in direct opposition to Finley (1956) 41, who writes 'The economy was such that the creation of new fortunes, and thereby of new nobles, was out of the question. Marriage was strictly class-bound, so that the other door to social advancement was also securely locked.' The example of the 'Cretan' Odysseus proves that successful warriors were in no way barred economically from advancement. They were also not barred from marriages to women from wealthy families.

<sup>98</sup> Harris (2012) 9-11.



suitors' transgression, which was to seize another man's property, not usurp his position. The gods, as well as mortals, were expected to enforce the accepted norms of the communities depicted in the poems. Mentor criticises the community for not acting against the suitors' transgressions, which, he implies, would have been expected. Telemachus reinforces this when he addresses the assembly regarding the suitors' transgressions. 'Even you must be scandalised and ashamed before the neighbouring men about us, the people who live around our land; fear also the gods' anger, lest they, astonished by evil actions, turn against you' (*Od.* 2.64-67). Should a man's property be seized by another, he expects recompense. Neleus takes a share of the booty his son Nestor won from the Epeians because they stole his horses and chariot, 'for indeed a great debt was owing to him in shining Elis. It was four horses, race-competitors with their own chariot...but Augeias the *anax* of men took these, and kept them' (*Il.* 11.697-700). Agamemnon's seizure of Achilles' slave Briseis is another notable example, causing Achilles to threaten to kill any man who takes any of his other possessions (*Il.* 1.300-303). Plundering the property of another man appears to have been contrary to the accepted norms of the community. While transgressing these incurred the indignation of men and aroused the anger of the gods, plundering in retaliation or raiding foreign peoples who lived some distance away does not seem to have been considered inappropriate.

Ransoming captives could also bring substantial wealth in the form of craft goods and precious metals, items often collectively referred to as *keimelion* (treasure). Chryses offers Agamemnon 'gifts beyond count' for the return of his daughter (*Il.* 1.13). Dolon attempts to save his life by offering Odysseus and Diomedes a large ransom; 'in my house there is bronze, and gold, and difficultly wrought iron, and my father would make you glad with abundant ransom' (*Il.*

10.378-381). Priam brings a large ransom to Achilles for Hektor's body. It includes fine cloth, blankets and clothing as well as gold (*Il.* 24.228-237). Despite the obvious material benefits, the *basileus* depicted in Homer is not obliged, or always inclined, to accept the ransom. Agamemnon would rather have Chryses' daughter as his slave, and Odysseus and Diomedes prefer to kill Dolon despite his offer. Some of the items from a ransom payment could be passed on as gifts to friends and followers.<sup>99</sup> A silver bowl, originally paid to Patroklos as ransom for Lykaon, is awarded as a prize by Achilles at the funeral games of Patroklos, neatly indicating the potential for these goods to be redistributed and used to increase the giver's prestige, and the importance of violence as a means of collecting these items (*Il.* 23.740-748).

Warfare and raiding also enabled Homeric leaders to seize people as slaves. As will be shown, slaves were essential for maintaining the position of a *basileus*.<sup>100</sup> The institution of slavery will be discussed further in the study of social practices later in this chapter. Agamemnon intended that Chryseis, a captive taken during the war with Troy, would be put to work in his house in Argos (*Il.* 1.29-31). The plot of the *Iliad* revolves around the anger of Achilles over Agamemnon's decision to take away his slave, Briseis, who had been captured by the army and subsequently awarded to Achilles (*Il.* 1.61-62). In the Achaian camp the army buys wine, for which they 'paid slaves taken in war' among other things (*Il.* 7.475). Andromache expects that she and Astyanax will be taken as slaves should Troy be sacked (*Il.* 24.731-734). Odysseus' crew seize the Kikonian women when they capture their city (*Od.* 9.41), and Odysseus' fictitious band of Cretan pirates set about seizing women and children almost immediately upon arrival in Egypt (*Od.* 17.433). We are told that Eurymedousa, a slave in the house of Alkinoös, was brought from across the sea

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<sup>99</sup> Donlan (1982) 142.

<sup>100</sup> Harris (2012) 362-366.

before being given as a prize to Alkinoös (*Od.* 7.7-12). It appears that there was the potential for very large numbers of slaves to be taken in war. Some are seized as individuals or in small numbers during raids in the epics, although some passages imply that all the women and children of a defeated city might be enslaved.<sup>101</sup> These slaves could be given as gifts or prizes, traded for goods or be put to work in the household of a *basileus*. A successful leader could find himself in possession of any amount of slaves, from one given as a prize, to a portion of an entire settlement. The vital importance of these slaves to maintaining the power of the *basileis* will be discussed later.

Military success enabled the Homeric warrior to achieve higher status in his community and continuing success justified his increasingly privileged status to his people and to his peers. Raiding and the profits of war also enabled these men to distribute booty and captives to their followers, as well as providing them with a crucial source of slave labour.<sup>102</sup> The evidence so far indicates that power and status in Homeric society were not hereditary, but achieved through personal success and ability.<sup>103</sup>

In the context of violence and personal power Hektor's prayer for his son is revealing. Hektor asks that Astyanax be 'pre-eminent among the Trojans, great in

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<sup>101</sup> *Il.* 3.301, 4.238-239, 17.224, 24.731-734.

<sup>102</sup> Adkins (1997) 700-701, has opposed military success as the primary qualification for Homeric leadership, citing inherited wealth, lands and slaves as the main source of authority. See also Adkins (1960) 34.

<sup>103</sup> The conclusion of this section on warfare and violence disagrees with that of Adkins (1982) 293. 'Evidently noblemen are expected to fight in positions of special danger, and they enjoy certain privileges. Sarpedon reminds Glaucus of his privileges, his *time*, and alleges that they are doing nothing to earn their *time* at the moment. But it is also clear that Glaucus and Sarpedon have not been elected to their high position in virtue of great strength and warlike valor: they are hereditary noblemen who have privileges and therefore ought to fight bravely.' Although Adkins admits the importance of martial prowess as a source of privilege, he assumes that Homeric leaders were hereditary nobility. The means to acquire power and wealth discussed so far required only personal strength and prowess leading to military success, not an inherited position. The fact that Adkins acknowledges and discusses the significance of military success but assumes power derived from hereditary right illustrates the persistence of this idea.

strength...and rule strongly (*iphi anassein*) over Ilion' (*Il.* 6.477-478). Although the prayer shows that the poet considers personal strength and leadership in the community to be inseparable, the use of *iphi* is significant. This word appears in two contexts in Homer. In the *Iliad* it is used several times in connection with the rule of a god, but when used in connection with the infinitive verb *anassein* (to rule),<sup>104</sup> it otherwise refers to mortal rulers. The second context where *iphi* appears is that of battle, combat or the physical act of killing or of subduing the enemy. Here it is linked with the verbs *iphi macheisthai*,<sup>105</sup> *iphi ktamenoio* (*Il.* 3.375), and *iphi damenai*.<sup>106</sup> This second context is unmistakably one of physical violence and *iphi* appears far more commonly in this context than in connection with *anassein*. As Hektor is praying for the best possible future for his son, his use of *iphi* suggests that, in this instance, the word cannot be negative in any sense. Yet Hektor is praying that his son might rule Ilion 'by force' or 'by might'. Considering the importance of the *basileus* as a leader in war and the close relationship between military success and personal power, *iphi* accurately describes the manner in which a *basileus* was expected to maintain his rule. It has already been shown that *basileis* led their people in war, conducted violent raids and took up conspicuous positions on the battlefield at the head of their followers. As these are the practices Hektor desires his son to engage in successfully, the use of *iphi* alongside *anassein* further suggests that personal strength, not inherited status or public appointment, was the primary qualification for power.

The military failure of a leader, as well as behaviour deemed to be offensive or irresponsible, could have the opposite effect. Allies might question his leadership,

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<sup>104</sup> *Il.* 1.38, 452, 6.478. *Od.* 11.284.

<sup>105</sup> *Il.* 1.151, 2.270, 4.287, 5.606, 12.367, 18.14, 21.486.

<sup>106</sup> *Il.* 19.417, 21.208. *Od.* 18.57, 156.

abandon his cause and, if they considered themselves sufficiently injured, threaten him with violence.<sup>107</sup> Hektor hints at the social consequences of defeat, ‘since by my own recklessness I have ruined my people, I feel shame before the Trojans and the Trojan women...that someone who is less of a man than I will say of me: ‘Hektor believed in his own strength and ruined his people’ (*Il.* 22.104-107). Odysseus is criticised by Eurylochos, who tries to persuade the crew not to follow him to Circe’s house, reminding them of the men they lost to the Cyclops, and that it was ‘by this man’s recklessness that these too perished’ (*Od.* 10.437).<sup>108</sup> On his return to Ithaka Odysseus is also criticised by Eupheithes at the assembly, who states that ‘he took many excellent men away in the vessels with him, and lost the hollow ships, and lost all the people’ (*Od.* 24.427-428). Eupheithes, bent on revenge against Odysseus, attempts to use Odysseus’ failure to bring the men home safely to arouse the anger of the assembly against him. This incident not only illustrates the importance of maintaining popular support, but suggests that the community could shift their support and were not necessarily bound to the will of the *basileus*. Although the first example is in a fanciful setting, these instances suggest that the men who followed a Homeric leader expected him to have a mind for their safety and not carelessly lead them into disaster. A leader who made poor decisions might lose popular support, but disgruntled followers, such as Eurylochos, might also be encouraged to use the opportunity to attack that leader’s authority.

Hesitation and cowardly behaviour in battle, as well as outright failure, also sapped a Homeric leader’s authority and power.<sup>109</sup> Glaucos criticises Hektor for not

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<sup>107</sup> ‘...one must not allow oneself to be treated with disrespect; to retaliate forcefully and even violently is a sign of power and the mark of a ‘real man’ and a ‘somebody’. van Wees (1992) 112.

<sup>108</sup> For Eurylochos’ pejorative language see Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) 67.

<sup>109</sup> This view of followers attracted through military success disagrees with that of Finley (1956) 58: ‘Altogether the chief aristocrats managed – by a combination of slaves, chiefly female, and a whole

rescuing the body of Sarpedon. He rebukes him, telling Hektor ‘you come far short in your fighting’ (*Il.* 17.142-153). Glaukos then threatens to lead the Lykians away from Troy, judging that if Hektor will not save Sarpedon’s body, he cannot be relied upon. It is remarkable that Glaukos felt justified or angered enough to abandon an ally who had shown, what Glaukos considered, shortcomings on the battlefield. There is no obvious impediment to Glaukos carrying out his threat to depart, suggesting that he only considered Hektor an ally while Hektor fulfilled his military expectations. Their relationship was clearly not defined by any formal agreement consisting of terms and obligations, such as those established between later Greek states. Similarly, Odysseus is so disgusted by Agamemnon’s suggestion that they flee from Troy at night he exclaims ‘I wish you directed some other unworthy army, and were not lord over us’ (*Il.* 14.84-85). Military failure, recognised in high losses of men, acts of cowardice, or simply failing to meet the expectations of allies and peers, caused discontent, provoked reproaches, and prompted friends and followers to consider abandoning their ally or their leader.

A Homeric leader, for all his potential power and martial prowess, had to be careful not to offend his allies and followers. An obvious example of this would be Agamemnon’s decision to take Briseis from Achilles, who considered her to be his property. This prompts Achilles to ask Agamemnon ‘how shall any one of the Achaians readily obey you either to go on a journey or to fight men strongly in battle?’ (*Il.* 1.150-151). This passage suggests that Agamemnon’s seizure of Achilles’ prize (*geras*) would surely discourage men from following him in the

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hierarchy of retainers, supplemented by *thetes* – to build up very imposing and very useful household forces, equipped to do whatever was required of a man of status and power in their world.’ The evidence presented here gives no indication that followers were dependants. These men followed their respective leaders as a favour, for plunder or gifts, or because, as will be shown, they feared his power.

future. Achilles then reminds Agamemnon that the Achaians accompany him ‘for your sake’ (*Il.* 1.157) and ‘to do you favour’ (*Il.* 1.158). Not only is Achilles so outraged by Agamemnon’s behaviour toward him that he withdraws his military support, he actually draws his sword from its sheath, seriously considering killing Agamemnon in front of the army (*Il.* 1.188-195). Achilles, in his anger, highlights some of the criteria a Homeric leader had to meet to retain the support of his followers, and treating them respectfully and allowing them to retain their allotted plunder appear to have been particularly significant.<sup>110</sup> The vital importance of maintaining certain standards of conduct toward one’s followers is well illustrated by this episode. Agamemnon’s behaviour not only provokes Achilles to insult him publicly and withdraw from battle at a critical time, but Achilles is only restrained from killing the commander of the entire expedition by the intervention of a goddess. Achilles is not alone in resenting and reacting to Agamemnon’s behaviour. For following such a man as Agamemnon, who has allegedly hoarded treasure for himself and dishonoured the best warrior in the army, Thersites calls the Achaians ‘fools, poor abuses, you women, not men, of Achaia’ (*Il.* 2.235).<sup>111</sup> Thersites criticises the Achaians for being willing to fight for Agamemnon despite the fact he has mistreated them. The Achaians themselves, sympathetic to Achilles, begin to fight only half-heartedly against the Trojans (*Il.* 13.105-114). This later causes Agamemnon to exclaim in frustration, ‘Oh, shame, for I think that all the...Achaians are storing anger against me in their hearts, as Achilles did, and no longer will fight for me by the grounded vessels’ (*Il.* 14.49-51). This is an explicit acknowledgement that the resentment of followers and loss of popular support caused the military power of a *basileus* to wane. Disgruntled warriors can also be found on the Trojan

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<sup>110</sup> van Wees (1992) 309.

<sup>111</sup> For an assessment of Agamemnon as ‘greedy’ and Thersites’ arguments see Kirk (1985) 140-141.

side. Aineias is found by Deiphobos at the ‘uttermost edge of the battle’ since ‘he was forever angry with brilliant Priam because great as he was he did him no honour among his people’ (*Il.* 13.459-461). We are not told what specific slights Aineias feels that he has suffered, but his reaction is the same as that of Achilles. For similar reasons to Achilles, Aineias, who considers himself badly treated, withdraws his military support. The army of Agamemnon depicted in the *Iliad* was no feudal host of serfs bound by a law or common custom to follow their commanders into battle. The Achaian host depicted by the poet was composed of free men who followed their respective leaders, as Achilles tells Agamemnon, as a favour. This service would ideally be rewarded with opportunities to seize booty, and with gifts and prizes that conferred honour on the recipient.<sup>112</sup> A Homeric war leader also had to take care not to lead his followers recklessly into danger or give them cause to feel offended if he wished to retain their support. A man who led his followers into disaster or whose behaviour made them feel slighted faced disobedience and challenges to his authority as well as discontent. The lower ranking men like Thersites might grumble and encourage each other to desert him, but his peers and powerful allies had the authority and strength to lead their men home and were capable of reacting to perceived mistreatment with criticism, insults and even violence.

In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the inability of a *basileus* to defend himself and his possessions, as well as his people and followers, could not only result in a loss of

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<sup>112</sup> This is a very ‘positive’ view of the factors that might have encouraged warriors to follow a man like Agamemnon. It is important to acknowledge that these factors existed alongside a fear of powerful *basileis*. This stemmed from the potentially violent methods these *basileis* used to maintain their dominance. Violence as a means of maintaining power in Homeric society is discussed below.



status, but loss of property and further threats of violence.<sup>113</sup> This supports the idea that personal achievement and ability were qualifications for high standing in the community. Odysseus clearly expects a man of standing to, at some point, be compelled to fight in defence of his property, stating ‘there is no grief that comes to the heart, nor yet any sorrow, when a man is hit, fighting in battle for the sake of his own possessions, either to guard his shining sheep or his cattle’ (*Od.* 17.470-472). Odysseus, then, is familiar with the practice of making predatory attacks on another’s property. Achilles’ shade asks after his father ‘whether he still keeps his position among the Myrmidon hordes, or whether in Hellas and Phthia they have diminished his state, because old age constrains his hands and feet’ (*Od.* 11.495-497). If Peleus no longer has the strength to defend himself, Achilles fears for his standing and expects Peleus to lose his privileges. Respect for Peleus’ age is clearly no impediment to opportunistic and predatory attacks, neither do we hear of any defence against attack that might come from occupying a publicly recognised office or public position. Similarly Andromache fears for the fate of her son, Astyanax, when Hektor is killed, predicting that ‘there will be hard work for him and sorrows, for others will take his lands away from him’ (*Il.* 22.488-489). Achilles and Andromache share the same concern. The vulnerability of Peleus and Astyanax, stemming from their physical inability to defend themselves and enforce authority, is likely to result in the loss of their possessions and status.<sup>114</sup> The situation of

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<sup>113</sup> This kind of violent acquisition of land and property is often underrepresented in the scholarship. Raafaub (1997) 634, barely nods at the sudden changes of fortune that might have overtaken powerful families: ‘...the paramount *basileus* holds an inherited, though precarious, position of pre-eminence as *primus inter pares* – or ‘a bit more’.’ Van Wees (2000a) 60, writing on Megara in the time of Theognis, gives more weight to this phenomenon: ‘In a violently competitive society...one may expect to find considerable social mobility, as successful perpetrators of violence and deceit rise while their victims’ fortunes decline in proportion.’

<sup>114</sup> This is generally supported by Donlan (1979) 65: ‘For inherent in the idea of position-authority is the condition that the individual who holds the *position* of leader may be inferior in those skills and attributes which the society values, and which, in fact, are necessary to the continuing prosperity of the group. The possibility of such a challenge is implicit in the very nature of the structure we have

Telemachus is equivalent and is summarised by Peisistratos. ‘For a child endures many griefs in his house when his father is gone away, and no others are there to help him, as now Telemachus’ father is gone away, and there are no others who can defend him against the evil that is in his country’ (*Od.* 4.164-167). Considering these words and the actions of the suitors, the possessions of Odysseus, let alone his position in his community, are clearly not protected through occupying a public office, by a law, or absolutely guaranteed to pass to Telemachus through inheritance. Telemachus himself states ‘there are many other Achaian *basileis*...in seagirt Ithaka, any of whom might hold this position, now that the great Odysseus has perished’ (*Od.* 1.394-396).<sup>115</sup> Telemachus does not expect to inherit Odysseus’ position as the most powerful man in Ithaka, but he does want to inherit his father’s property. ‘But I will be the *anax* over my own household and my servants, whom the great Odysseus won by force for me’ (*Od.* 1.397-398). It is crucial to recognise that Telemachus makes a distinction between his relationship to his father’s property and his father’s position. Telemachus claims no right over a title or office, although he expresses his determination to hold onto his father’s possessions. As van Wees states, ‘it is assumed that a weak or absent man’s property is unlikely to be left in peace.’<sup>116</sup> Van Wees echoes the warnings of Eurykleia to Telemachus. ‘And these men will devise evils against you...so you shall die by guile, and they divide all that is yours. No, but stay here and guard your possessions’ (*Od.* 2.367-369). Athene also cautions Telemachus. ‘Telemachus, it no longer becomes you to stray off so far from home, leaving your possessions behind and men in your palace who are so overbearing.

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been describing, since the position of leader demands possession of those qualities to a great degree, and is...organically derived from those qualities.’

<sup>115</sup> This passage was interpreted by Finley (1956) 73-74 as evidence for a power struggle between monarchy and aristocracy. This was because Finley made a distinction between *basileis* who were ‘chiefs’ and *basileis* who were ‘kings’.

<sup>116</sup> van Wees (1992) 105.

You must not let them divide up and eat up your substance' (*Od.* 15.10-13). The lack of any obvious deterrent in the Homeric poems, other than force, to those wishing to take advantage of a weak neighbour is clear. These examples clearly show that personal ability and strength, skill and valour were rewarded with rank, privileges and, ultimately, a place at the head of the community. Failing to meet these standards caused the status of a *basileus* to come into question. There is no hint whatsoever in Homer that private property was protected by a law enforced by an impartial third party, although respecting an individual's property appears to have been the accepted norm. There is also no indication that a man's status within his community was formalised or protected by any public office or that formal institutions existed to bestow an inherited title or office.

Peisistratos' description of Telemachus' difficult situation highlights the importance of immediate family as military assets (*Od.* 4.164-167). As well as his close relatives, a *basileus'* *hetairoi* would also follow him to war. *Hetairoi* appear in the epics as a man's close friends and are often depicted in a generally subordinate role, although they are by no means treated as servants or bondsmen. The bond between a man and his *hetairos* could be particularly close and is generally depicted as a relationship characterised by a very high level of trust and mutual obligation. Mentor, for example, being a *hetairos* of Odysseus, is trusted with the care of Odysseus' house while he is away from Ithaka (*Od.* 2.225-227). *Hetairoi* are also trusted with carrying precious pieces of loot to the rear during battle (*Il.* 3.378, 13.640-641, 16.665), and are given pivotal roles on the battlefield, such as driving another man's chariot (*Il.* 8.124-125, 316-317). It is Pandaros' *hetairoi* who guard him with their shields as he prepares to shoot Menelaos with his bow (*Il.* 4.113-115). When Menelaos is wounded by an arrow, it is his *hetairoi* and his brother,

Agamemnon, who immediately gather round him in concern (*Il.* 4.154) and it is Teukros' *hetairoi* who carry him to safety when he is wounded (*Il.* 8.332-334). Sarpedon's corpse is also carried from the battlefield and tended by his *hetairoi* (*Il.* 5.692-695). A man's *hetairoi* often appear in close physical proximity; those of Diomedes sleep around his hut (*Il.* 10.151-153), those of Achilles sleep around his (*Il.* 1.349), and a speech of Andromache suggests that a man will be expected to attend feasts with his *hetairoi* (*Il.* 22.491-498).<sup>117</sup>

A high-ranking individual could also be a *hetairos*. Agamemnon clearly believes that Idomeneus is obliged to fight for him as he has treated Idomeneus well and often invited him to feasts. Idomeneus responds by promising to be an *erieros hetairos* to Agamemnon (*Il.* 4.257-264). Mentor and Halitherses had been Odysseus' *hetairoi* and are expected by the assembly to offer aid to Odysseus' son (*Od.* 2.254). Obligations towards one's *hetairoi* do not seem to disappear at the moment of death. Glaukos describes Sarpedon as being *xeinon kai hetairon* to Hektor, and is subsequently appalled by Hektor's apparent disinclination to rescue Sarpedon's body from the Achaians (*Il.* 17.150-151). Zeus predicts that Achilles will take revenge against Hektor for the death of his *hetairos* Patroklos (*Il.* 17.200-206). Thoas is unable to strip the armour from Peiros' corpse because Peiros' *hetairoi* stand in his way (*Il.* 4.532-533). These men were so valued that the death of a *hetairos* is even compared by Alkinoös to the death of a close family member (*Od.* 8.584-586). Andromache's prediction that Astyanax will be ejected from the feasts of his dead father's *hetairoi* suggests that, unlike the practice of guest-friendship, the relationship would not necessarily be inherited by the dead man's child (*Il.* 22.491-498).

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<sup>117</sup> van Wees (1992) 48.

Though the bond between a man and his *hetairoi* was not merely composed of obligations and reciprocal favours, it was also an emotional bond. *Hetairoi* are described on a number of occasions as *philos* (beloved).<sup>118</sup> Upon the death of a man's *hetairos*, the poet describes individuals who are overcome with grief, anger, or an almost frenzied desire for vengeance. Achilles is the most famous example of this reaction, but there are others. Hektor kills Lykophron, *hetairos* of Aias, causing Aias to ask Teukros to shoot down Trojans in revenge (*Il.* 15.436-441). Hektor himself loses several companions and feels 'bitter sorrow' for their deaths (*Il.* 8.124-125, 316-317). Odysseus is gripped by 'terrible anger' when Leukos, one of his *hetairoi*, is killed (*Il.* 4.491-495).

Agamemnon and Telemachus put on lavish feasts for their *hetairoi* (*Il.* 4.257-264, *Od.* 15.505-507), and Odysseus' *hetairoi* expect to share in the wealth he collects on his journey (*Od.* 10.38-45). In return for these favours a man's *hetairoi* will perform all manner of tasks. They can be found performing mundane services such as readying a chariot for a journey (*Il.* 3.259-260) or rowing a ship, such as that of Telemachus or those of Achilles and Odysseus. *Hetairoi* are also warriors who add considerable military strength to a *basileus*. In the *Odyssey* they are recruited for clandestine actions, such as assassination or ambush (*Od.* 4.669-672, 13.267). On the battlefield *hetairoi* will defend a *basileus* and expect to be defended in return. Achilles makes this clear as he laments his failure to protect Patroklos. 'I must die soon, then; since I was not to stand by my *hetairos* when he was killed. And now, far away from the land of his fathers, he has perished, and lacked my fighting strength to defend him. Now...since I was no light of safety to Patroklos, nor to my other *hetairoi*, who in their numbers went down before glorious Hektor' (*Il.* 18.99-103).

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<sup>118</sup> *Il.* 4.523, 5.325, 9.205, 11.615, 13.549.

Passages such as this make it clear that *hetairoi* were not retainers in the sense that they were dependents. They were trusted, close friends of varying status who expected to be treated with a great deal of respect as well as gifts and invitations to feasts. Even allowing for poetic exaggeration, the richest and most powerful *basileis* seem to have been able to afford to maintain their relationships with many *hetairoi*, as Achilles and Odysseus crew multiple ships with their companions.

Although *basileis* could maintain their position by distributing booty or ensuring their followers were well treated, the use of violence to maintain power and dominance over other men is also a feature depicted in the epics. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* depict violence as a method by which Homeric leaders maintained their power off the battlefield or in times of relative peace. The following examples illustrate the use, and ever-present threat, of violence within Homeric society. Thersites, who had spoken in a manner displeasing to Odysseus, is beaten by him into silence (*Il.* 2.265-269).<sup>119</sup> When the Achaian army flees to the ships, Odysseus restores order partly by striking men with a staff (*Il.* 2.198-199). Odysseus, on his return home, is angered by the criticism of one of his followers and ponders whether he should behead the man on the spot ‘even though he was nearly related to me by marriage’ (*Od.* 10.438-44). Odysseus seriously considered killing a man because he had criticised him and challenged his authority. The poet also describes men who are fearful of provoking such a violent response from a more powerful man. Kalchas the seer will not reveal Apollo’s anger over Agamemnon’s treatment of Chryses to the Achaians until he has extracted an oath from Achilles that he will protect him (*Il.*

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<sup>119</sup> Contrast Odysseus’ treatment of the fleeing Achaians with Xenophon’s account of the Greek mercenaries deployed in Persia. Clearchus, a high ranking officer, is stoned by his own men for not informing them of the true nature of their campaign and narrowly avoids death (*Xen. An.* 1.3). Clearchus later has a soldier flogged and the soldier’s comrades, spotting Clearchus returning to camp, hurl an axe at him and then resort to pelting him with stones (*Xen. An.* 5.11-14).

1.75-91). This is because Kalchas expects to displease Agamemnon and states that ‘a *basileus* when he is angry with a man beneath him is too strong, and suppose even for the day itself he swallow down his anger, he still keeps bitterness that remains until its fulfilment deep in his chest’ (*Il.* 1.80-83). Although Achilles was restrained from doing actual violence to Agamemnon by Athene, he threatens Agamemnon with death should he attempt to seize any of his other possessions, warning that ‘instantly your own black blood will stain my spearpoint’ (*Il.* 1.303). Odysseus similarly warns the Achaians not to abandon Agamemnon. ‘May he not in anger do some harm to the sons of the Achaians! For the anger of god-supported *basileis* is a big matter’ (*Il.* 2.195-196).<sup>120</sup> Antinoös makes grave threats towards Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, ‘for the way you talk, the young men might take you and drag you by hand or foot through the house, and tear the skin on your body’ (*Od.* 17.479-480). Later, Antinoös is scandalised and angered by a beggar’s request to compete in the competition to string Odysseus’ bow, and threatens to force the beggar onto a ship and send him to Echetos who will horribly mutilate him (*Od.* 21.305-311). In another example, dire threats are made by the suitors against Athene, who had taken the form of Mentor. The suitors threatened what appeared to be Mentor with death and the division of his property if he continued to support Odysseus against them (*Od.* 22.213-223). A conversation between Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, and Telemachus reveals that the expected reaction towards the aggressive and disrespectful suitors would be to drive them from Odysseus’ house by force. Odysseus asks Telemachus why he tolerates the suitors. ‘Do you find your brothers wanting? A man trusts help from these in the fighting when a great quarrel arises’

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<sup>120</sup> The individual *basileis* mentioned here clearly did not attain and keep their positions solely through making a positive and ‘outstanding contribution to the community’. Adkins (1997) 700. These men were prepared to use violence against members of that community to maintain their dominance.

(*Od.* 16-97-98). Unlike Hektor, Telemachus cannot call upon brothers, or brothers-in-law, to come to his aid, being the only child of Odysseus. Telemachus expresses his desire to drive the suitors out by force, threatening ‘I will endeavour to visit evil destructions upon you’ (*Od.* 2.316) and ‘I only wish I were as much stronger, and more of a fighter with my hands, than all these suitors who are here in my household’ (*Od.* 21.372-373). He is of course unable to drive away the suitors as he lacks the strength. Telemachus has no siblings and he is too young to have formed the friendships and marriage alliances through which he could seek allies. Although Telemachus tried to encourage public disapproval of the suitors, the *Odyssey* seems to present violence as the only effective means by which the suitors can be expelled from Odysseus’ house.<sup>121</sup>

In one of his Cretan stories, Odysseus tells how he murdered Orsilochus, the son of Idomeneus. Orsilochus had attempted to deprive Odysseus of his share of Trojan booty because Odysseus refused to serve Idomeneus, leader of the Cretan contingent at Troy, as his *therapon*. In this situation a warrior of some standing, Odysseus, refused to do a favour for a greater man, whose son reacts by making a predatory attempt on Odysseus’ wealth (*Od.* 13.259-271). The informal nature of this killing is almost identical to other examples in the poems. In his invented story, Odysseus recalls ‘I lay in wait for him with a friend by the road, and struck him with the bronze-headed spear as he came back from the fields’ (*Od.* 13.267-268). The suitors plan a similar fate for Telemachus, ‘let us surprise him and kill him, in the fields away from the city, or in the road’ (*Od.* 16.383-384). This design is adopted after the suitors’ first attempt at assassinating Telemachus at sea fails (*Od.* 4.669-672, 16.341-370). Tydeus, father of Diomedes, is ambushed by a large band of

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<sup>121</sup> For use of violence to maintain domination over slaves see Harris (2012) 12-13.



Thebans as he travels from their city after humiliating them in athletic competition. ‘The Kadmeians...in anger compacted an ambushcade of guile on his way home, assembling together fifty fighting men’ (*Il.* 4.391-393). The king of Lykia ‘spun another entangling treachery’ and sent a group of men to assassinate Bellerophon, having been asked to kill him by Proitos, his daughter’s husband (*Il.* 6.167-169, 187-189). Aigisthos is able to murder Agamemnon, despite Agamemnon’s great strength and prowess, through treachery. ‘Choosing out the twenty best fighting men in the district, he set an ambush...then led him in all unsuspecting of death, and feasted him and killed him feasting, as one strikes down an ox at his manger’ (*Od.* 4.530-535). These killings and attempted killings were not formal executions, and, with the possible exception of the ambush of Tydeus, they lacked the implicit consent of the community or of an appointed magistrate. Killings such as these relied on surprise, strength and treachery to achieve their aims. They are even distinct from instances of popular violence and mob justice as they largely lack the ‘popular’ element. These were informal murders carried out by small groups of private individuals organised *ad hoc* to settle private grudges or to further private interests.<sup>122</sup>

It is worth examining the speech of Amphinomus at *Od.* 16.400-405 within this context of violence and personal power. ‘Dear friends, I for my part would not be willing to murder Telemachus; we should first have to ask the gods for their counsel. Then, if the ordinances of great Zeus approve of it, I myself would kill him and tell all others to do so; but I say we must give it up, if the gods deny us’. This speech has attracted claims that Homeric rulers operated under a form of the divine right of kings. Despite Nilsson writing as early as 1933 that the Homeric *basileus*

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<sup>122</sup> Finley (1956) 66, considered homicide in Homer to be ‘largely a private affair’. Finley does not reconcile this view with the scene on the shield of Achilles depicting a dispute over a killing in a clearly *public* meeting (*Il.* 18.497-508).

‘was no Pharaoh nor was he a king by right of divine standing’<sup>123</sup> some scholars have persisted in assuming that, in Homeric society, those that held the ‘office’ or rank of a *basileus* did so through divine right. This idea has found its way into textbooks<sup>124</sup> and is still entertained in more recent scholarship.<sup>125</sup> It is not a satisfactory interpretation as it is not only unsupported by evidence from the rest of the poems, but, as has been shown, the society depicted was dominated by men who maintained power through personal prowess. So far, in the context of violence, it has been shown that power was a matter of personal strength and ability and the poems have indicated the acute vulnerability of those who lacked these. The gods were not responsible for appointing the ruling men in the Homeric poems. We are told that the gods ‘spin misery’ even for *basileis* (*Od.* 20.196). The above evidence has already proved that being the son or father of a *basileus* was itself no defence against opportunistic attack. These individuals still required personal prowess, followers, wealth and relatives to support their position and defend their possessions. Considering these objections, it is necessary to attempt to identify an alternative meaning in Amphinomus’ speech, one that can be corroborated by evidence from the rest of the epics. A more likely meaning is that Amphinomus does not revere the ‘office’ of *basileus* and he does not venerate Telemachus’ pedigree. Amphinomus certainly does not regard Telemachus’ person to be sacred. Instead, by accepting Amphinomus’ hesitation as a very understandable reluctance to murder the son of a wealthy and influential man, famous for his cunning and martial prowess, we can begin to create a more coherent and plausible picture of the situation and one that is consistent with the norms of Homeric society that have been identified. The more likely meaning of Amphinomus is this: that he fears violent reprisals should the

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<sup>123</sup> Nilsson (1933) 223.

<sup>124</sup> Page (1959) 131.

<sup>125</sup> Geddes (1984) 17, 28.

suitors make an attempt on Telemachus' life. It is not difficult to see this fear of violent reprisal in operation elsewhere in the epics. Mentor warns the assembly of the consequences of disrespecting the house of Odysseus, stating that the suitors 'lay their heads on the line when violently they eat up the house of Odysseus, who, they say to themselves, will not come back' (*Od.* 2.237-238). Odysseus himself is aware that powerful men will seek revenge if they are able. He points out that the family of a murdered man will drive out the killer, and implies that the man who kills the son of a *basileus* should fear even greater reprisals (*Od.* 23.118-122). It is reasonable to assume that a wealthy and influential family would be more effective in carrying out acts of vengeance. After Tlepolemos, the son of Herakles, killed his father's uncle he fled straightaway. 'At once he put ships together and assembled a host of people and went fugitive over the sea, since the others threatened, the rest of the sons and the grandsons of...Herakles' (*Il.* 2.664-666). Odysseus' false tale of his murder of Orsilochus features a speedy flight after a murder. Although he carries out the killing stealthily, 'there was a very dark night spread over all the sky, nor did anyone see me, nor did anyone know of it when I stripped the life from him' (*Od.* 13.268.271), he flees immediately, 'I went at once to a ship...and asked them to carry me and to set me down in Pylos or shining Elis' (*Od.* 13.272-275).<sup>126</sup> The Old Man of the Sea, speaking to Menelaos, expects Aigisthos to be the victim of a revenge-killing for the slaughter of Agamemnon. 'You might find Aigisthos still alive, or perhaps Orestes has beaten you to the kill, but you might be there for the burying' (*Od.* 4.546-547). The relatives of the slain suitors are no exception to this trend and see no other alternative to violence in their pursuit of vengeance against Odysseus (*Od.* 24.426-532). Although Medon and Halitherses try to stop the assembly from taking up

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<sup>126</sup> For exile after a killing as a recurring theme see Bowie (2013) 141.

Eupeithes' course of action, which is to launch an attack on Odysseus (*Od.* 24.443-462), they can suggest no other means of seeking redress for the killing of the suitors. Eupeithes and the others go so far as to arm themselves and Eupeithes himself is killed before order is restored. It is remarkable that in this final instance the use of lethal force was the only course of action seriously considered by both parties, and the intervention of Athene and Zeus is the only factor that prohibits further bloodshed (*Od.* 24.528-548). Several other killers in the epics resort to exile, such is their fear of retaliatory violence.<sup>127</sup>

When Amphinomus' speech is placed in its proper context, that is, within a society where great men eagerly resorted to violence, Amphinomus' reluctance becomes understandable. The plan of the suitors to murder Telemachus involves potentially fatal consequences for the assassins. A fear of sudden, violent reprisals is consistent with the norms and practices depicted in the rest of the poems. In this instance the body of evidence that exists in the poems makes it unnecessary and misleading to assume the presence of divine right or any form of abstract reverence for Telemachus' person or position.

Men clearly fear the power of *basileis* in the epics. Consequently, even powerful individuals like Odysseus are depicted warning their comrades against provoking a more powerful man (*Il.* 2.195-196). Homeric leaders had few qualms about using violence to maintain their dominance over weaker individuals. In the epics they beat those who displease them and are prepared to use deadly force in

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<sup>127</sup> Medon kills his father's wife's brother and flees (*Il.* 13.695-697). Patroklos flees to the house of Peleus after killing the son of Amphi-damas over a dice game (*Il.* 23.86-87). Theoklymenos is taken on by Telemachus after he kills a man. In this case in particular, the killer makes it clear how immediate the threat of retaliatory violence is: 'I have killed a man of my tribe...but he had many brothers and relatives...with great power among the Achaeans. Avoiding death at the hands of these men and black doom, I am a fugitive, since it is my fate to be a wanderer among men. Give me a place in your ship...lest they kill me; for now I think they are after me' (*Od.* 15.271-278).

response to perceived slights or signs of dissent as well as against actual physical attack. Opportunistic, unprovoked, killings were also carried out in the quest for profit and more power. Even fellow *basileis*, religious figures such as Chryses (*Il.* 1.26-32), and relatives were threatened with violence. Consequently, individuals in the Homeric poems are understandably wary of incurring the anger of a *basileus*. The examples above suggest that although men might have followed a *basileus* because of his reputation, for an opportunity to gather plunder or the promise of gifts, they would also conform to the will of a powerful man through fear. The heavy-handed and widespread use of violence maintained a Homeric leader's dominance alongside success in war, personal wealth and the social practices to be discussed in Part III.

Much of the evidence presented above has given the impression that opportunistic and predatory killings were a socially accepted or 'normative' part of life in Homeric Greece. This was not the case. The poet does not depict the killing of another individual, even by a wealthy, powerful man, as an act which went unpunished or uncensored by the community. The high number of fugitive killers noted above attests to this. When Odysseus shoots down Antinoös in his house, the suitors state clearly that Odysseus, still not fully realising his identity, must die for the killing (*Od.* 22.27-30). In this instance the suitors even thought that Antinoös had been killed by accident yet still demanded death as the penalty (*Od.* 22.31-33). Eupheithes is able to convince more than half of the assembly to follow him and attempt to kill Odysseus and Telemachus in revenge for killing the suitors, their relatives (*Od.* 24.463-468). Eupheithes even encourages the assembly to act quickly in taking revenge as he expects Odysseus' next action will be to flee from Ithaka (*Od.* 24.430-437). The remarkable implication here is that Eupheithes expected Odysseus

to flee from his own people, leaving behind his house and property, as a consequence of his killing of the suitors. A killer could also be punished by being made to pay *poine* (blood money) (*Il.* 18.497-499). If the payment was accepted the killer could remain in his own country without the threat of vengeance from the victim's family (*Il.* 9.632-636).<sup>128</sup> The evidence presented above should encourage the view that individuals in Homeric Greece, particularly powerful individuals, were *capable* of opportunistically using their influence and strength to kill others but that they should do so was not always approved of by their community. In essence, it is unlikely that even *basileis* could kill with complete impunity. The examples of Telemachus' appeal to the assembly (*Od.* 2.40-79), Antinoös' father's flight to Odysseus (*Od.* 16.426-430),<sup>129</sup> Odysseus' fear of reprisals from the people (*Od.* 23.117), and Eupheithes appeal to the assembly (*Od.* 24.426-437), prove that the community was capable of coordinated action against one of its own members, even against a *basileus*, should that member act against accepted norms of behaviour or against the wishes of the community.

### III

When not at war Homeric leaders ultimately maintained their power through the agricultural surplus produced by the labour of their slaves. We will see that this surplus could be redistributed as gifts and largesse, and enabled Homeric leaders to engage in the various social practices, to be examined in Part III, that were vital to maintaining their status. To a modern audience, one of the most remarkable aspects

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<sup>128</sup> See Gagarin (1981) 5-17.

<sup>129</sup> 'Do you not know how your father came here once, a fugitive in fear of the people? These were terribly angered with him, because he had thrown in his lot with the pirate Taphians and harried the Thesprotians, and these were friends of our people. They wanted to waste him away, to break the dear heart in him, to eat up his substance and abundant livelihood' (*Od.* 16.424-429).

of life in the epics is the widespread ownership of slaves. The wealthiest and most powerful men in the epics, such as Agamemnon, Alkinoös, Achilles and Priam, all possess slaves. They also seem to possess them in extremely large numbers. We encounter fifty female slaves in the fabulously rich house of Alkinoös and a further fifty in the house of Odysseus. They are employed grinding corn, weaving, and performing menial tasks.<sup>130</sup> Phoenix relates to Achilles that he had to evade not only the watchmen but the female slaves when escaping from the house of his father (*Il.* 9.477). Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, claims to have once been rich and therefore an owner of *dmoes myrioi*, ‘countless’, or even ‘ten thousand’ slaves (*Od.* 17.422). Even the poor Laertes owns at least eight slaves (*Od.* 24.386-390, 497-498). Male slaves are found tending the large flocks of cattle, sheep and goats belonging to the *basileis*, ensuring the herds multiply, driving the animals to town and slaughtering them (*Od.* 9.1-29). Male slaves planted and tended vines, fruit trees and other crops, and carried out general farm maintenance. Odysseus deliberately ‘mistakes’ his father Laertes for a slave while he is busy planting outdoors.<sup>131</sup> Agamemnon and Achilles also give slaves as gifts, prizes, or recompense to other *basileis*.<sup>132</sup> Slaves appear to have been as much a form of movable wealth as livestock or treasure items, and were clearly valued as gifts or prizes. The *basileis* acquired their slaves largely through war and raiding, although some slaves in the epics were born to slave parents, becoming the property of their parent’s master (*Od.* 24.386-388). A small number could be received as gifts or purchased.

The epics clearly portray the leading men as slave owners on a very large scale. The poet’s audience must have been familiar with the rich man who owned far

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<sup>130</sup> *Od.* 7.103-105, 22.421-423.

<sup>131</sup> *Od.* 24.221-225, 249-253.

<sup>132</sup> *Il.* 9.270-272, 281-282, 23.263.

more slaves than were required to support his family. For Odysseus' immediate household of three, counting Penelope, Telemachus and himself, a disproportionately large number of slaves are owned by Odysseus. Odysseus' slaves would have produced far more agricultural produce and clothing than could possibly have been consumed by the family.<sup>133</sup> Although some of this surplus was stored away (*Od.* 2.337-343), we will see that it could also be exchanged. Part III will discuss a number of social practices through which Homeric leaders maintained their power off the battlefield and the reliance of these practices on the produce of slaves will be made apparent.

Extensive lands were owned by the *basileis* and worked by their slaves.<sup>134</sup> These included pasture for animals, arable land for the planting of wheat and barley and even orchards of fruit trees. The types of domesticated animals kept by the *basileis* included sheep and cattle (*Od.* 1.92), goats (*Od.* 2.56), and even horses (*Od.* 3.263). The produce from these herds included cheese and milk as well as meat (*Od.* 4.85-88). Crops were also grown to be used as fodder for these animals (*Od.* 4.41). A speech by Noëmon, in which he asks about the whereabouts of his ship, shows the need for broad lands in which to graze animals, 'now I find that I need her for crossing over to spacious Elis, where I have a dozen horses, mares, and suckling from them hard-working unbroken mules' (*Od.* 4.634-637). Telemachus' refusal to accept horses from Menelaos also suggests that the poet's audience was able to identify good land for pastoral farming. 'I will not take the horses to Ithaka...since you are lord of a spreading plain, there is galingale, and there is wheat and millet

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<sup>133</sup> Harris (2006) 364.

<sup>134</sup> The size and disposition of these farms, estates, and herds, may account for the distortion we encounter when attempting to work out the ratio of female to male slaves. Male slaves appear in the poems allocated to farm work in the country, and as the *Odyssey* takes place primarily within various households, the workplace of female slaves, the ratio is inevitably distorted.



here and white barley, wide grown' (*Od.* 4.602-604). The *Odyssey* gives the impression that large pieces of land were also given over to arable farming. The poet describes Ephyre as 'that rich corn land' (*Od.* 2.328-329) and the sun rising over 'grain-giving farmland' (*Od.* 3.3). Telemachus and his companion drive their chariot through a 'plain full of wheat' (*Od.* 3.495). The *Iliad* also employs the image of the reaping of crops as a metaphor during the climax of a battle. 'And the men, like two lines of reapers who, facing each other, drive their course all down the field of wheat or of barley for a man blessed in substance, and the cut swathes showering' (*Il.* 11.67-69). Sarpedon describes the lands he and Glaukos owned as 'good land, orchard and vineyard, and ploughland for the planting of wheat' (*Il.* 12.314). Odysseus recognises the farming potential of unworked land. 'For it is not a bad place at all, it could bear all crops in season, and there are meadow lands...there could be grapes grown there endlessly, and there is smooth land for ploughing, men could reap a full harvest always in season' (*Od.* 9.131-135). One of Odysseus' false tales suggests that a man of property would be expected to spend some time in the fields and among his estates (*Od.* 13.268). All these passages suggest that arable farming was extensive, profitable, and a significant source of foodstuffs in Homeric Greece.<sup>135</sup> These crops would have been planted and then gathered in largely by slaves (*Hes. Op.* 571-573), although some hired labourers could have been employed, their numbers were small (*Hes. Op.* 600-603). The overwhelming dominance of labour by slaves should be made more obvious by the remarkable

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<sup>135</sup> As noted by van Wees (1992) 50: 'agriculture and viticulture are at least as important as animal husbandry' in Homeric Greece.

absence of labour for wages. Only a handful of references to labour for wages appear in the Homeric poems (*Il.* 21.441-455, *Od.* 10.85, *Od.* 18.357-361).<sup>136</sup>

As well as fields of crops, Penelope keeps an orchard and has a slave to tend it (*Od.* 4.737). Odysseus mentions the varieties of fruit trees he received as a gift from his father, ‘you gave me thirteen pear trees, and ten apple trees, and forty fig trees; and so also you named the fifty vines you would give’ (*Od.* 24.340-342). Even in his old age and poverty, Laertes still maintains a vineyard on his farm (*Od.* 1.193). Vegetable gardens were also cultivated and maintained (*Od.* 7.127). These descriptions suggest that wealthy individuals in Homeric Greece owned extensive lands that produced a wide variety of foodstuffs, and did not rely primarily on herds.

These lands could come into the possession of a Homeric leader through a number of ways. The three most prominent means of gaining land in Homeric society appear to have been marriage, feats of arms, and passing property on to one’s offspring.<sup>137</sup> Bellerophon receives land as part of his marriage (*Il.* 6.191-195) and Odysseus is offered a house and property by Alkinoös should he stay in Phaiakia and marry Nausikaa (*Od.* 7.311-315). Considering the large number of herds owned by these men, it is likely that land for pasture and grazing was also included in these exchanges. Meleagros was promised a large amount of prime land in return for fighting in defence of his city (*Il.* 9.576-580). Land might also be violently seized by powerful neighbours (*Il.* 22.488-489). Sarpedon states that he and Glaukos were ‘appointed a great piece of land’ that contained ‘orchard and vineyard, and ploughland for the planting of wheat’ because of their martial prowess (*Il.* 12.313-

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<sup>136</sup> Russo (1992) 70, follows Finley (1956) in claiming that the hired labourer occupied the lowest position in Homeric society. Slaves actually held the lowest position as shown by Harris (2012) 345-366.

<sup>137</sup> When lands and property were inherited by the dead man’s son or sons, the slaves also became the heir’s property (*Il.* 19.330-333).

314). When Achilles taunts Aeneas he asks him what the Trojans offered him in return for his service, ‘Or have the men of Troy promised you a piece of land, surpassing all others, fine ploughland and orchard for you to administer if you kill me?’ (*Il.* 20.184-186). It is assumed in Homer that land could be given out in return for military assistance. The poet says, in very vague terms, that Laertes ‘won’ his farm (*Od.* 24.207). Menelaos speaks in general terms of the land he would have liked to give Odysseus for his service to him. ‘I would have settled a city in Argos for him, and made him a home, bringing him from Ithaka with all his possessions, his son, all his people. I would have emptied one city for him out of those that are settled round about and under my lordship’ (*Od.* 4.174-177). For service to Menelaos, Odysseus might have received a large amount of property. However, it is unclear if the exchange of property and a move into lands dominated by Menelaos would compel Odysseus to become a *therapon* like Eteoneus, a ‘retainer’ or ‘henchman’ of Menelaos.<sup>138</sup> Eteoneus also lives in a house near to that of Menelaos and, despite being described as *kreion* (‘lord’ or ‘ruler’), performs domestic tasks within Menelaos’ household (*Od.* 4.22-24, 15.95-98). Privately owned lands are depicted as a source of great wealth in Homer and individuals are concerned with gathering land through marriage, inheriting from their father or military achievements. The extent of these lands and the wide variety of crops grown should further illustrate the significance of slave labour as a source of agricultural wealth.

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<sup>138</sup> Greenhalgh (1982) 81, correctly notes that the *therapon* could not have been a feudal position.

## IV

We will now turn to social practices as a means of gaining and maintaining power in Homeric society. In times of peace these practices enabled Homeric leaders to continue validating their position and gave them opportunities to increase their personal power. The practices that will be discussed in this section are feasting, religious practices, marriage, *xenoi*, gift-giving and largesse, the sponsoring of athletic competition, and protection payments.

### *a) Feasting*

The incidents of feasting in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are many and the frequency of these events reflects their importance.<sup>139</sup> Feasts are prepared by *basileis* to entertain their peers and also for their communities and followers. Nestor, his extended family and his entire community are feasting when Telemachus arrives at Pylos (*Od.* 3.4-11). Telemachus was invited to ‘equal feasts’ on Ithaka by other *basileis* (*Od.* 11.185). Alkinoös feasts the *basileis* of Phaiakia, whose wealth and power is not as great as his own (*Od.* 7.98-138). Agamemnon reminds fellow *basileis* that they have eaten at his feasts and enjoyed his generosity and hospitality.<sup>140</sup> This occurs on the battlefield as Agamemnon attempts to encourage various leaders in the Achaian army. Phoinix, although an exile, was taken in as a follower by Peleus and attended feasts at his home (*Il.* 9.486-488). Telemachus rewards his crew for their service to

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<sup>139</sup> Sherratt (2004) has examined the religious aspects of the Homeric feast and attempted to date some of its features.

<sup>140</sup> ‘I honour you, Idomeneus, beyond the fast-mounted Danaans whether in battle...whether it be at the feast, when the great men of the Argives blend in the mixing bowl the gleaming wine of the princes. Even though all the rest of the flowing-haired Achaians drink out their portion, still your cup stands filled forever...for you to drink when the pleasure takes you. Rise up then to battle...’ (*Il.* 4.257-264. Cf. 4.338-346).

him by feasting them on their return to Ithaca, ‘to be my thanks for sharing the journey with me’ (*Od.* 15.505-507). Odysseus, in one of his Cretan stories, provides his raiding party with enough to feast them for six days before setting off (*Od.* 14.249-252). Nestor also offers regular invitations to feasts as a reward for a particular service, in this case spying on the Trojan camp (*Il.* 10.216-217). Agamemnon attempts to increase or re-establish his prestige by feasting the leaders of the Achaian army after Nestor suggests that he do so (*Il.* 9.70-73), and Odysseus even suggests that Agamemnon appease Achilles partly by entertaining him with a generous meal (*Il.* 19.179-180). Even allowing for poetic exaggeration, the quantities of foodstuffs consumed at these events must have been very large, and the emphasis on the generosity of the host, particularly at large-scale events such as feasts for departing raiding parties, must have been obvious.

The guests at the feasts of Menelaos and Alkinoös ate in the conspicuous presence of their host’s wealth, surrounded by precious objects, arms and armour. Gold and silver are found on display in large quantities and objects made from precious metals are used by the guests during the feast.<sup>141</sup> When Athene, in the form of Mentis, visits Telemachus she is washed from gold and silver vessels and given a golden goblet to drink from (*Od.* 1.136-143). The effect of this conspicuous display of private wealth can be seen on Telemachus. ‘Son of Nestor...only look at the gleaming of the bronze all through these echoing mansions, and the gleaming of gold and amber, of silver and of ivory. The court of Zeus on Olympos must be like this on the inside, such abundance of everything’ (*Od.* 4.71-75). The display of precious objects in areas of the house open to guests was clearly intended to impress visitors. There is such an enormous quantity of weapons and armour exhibited on the walls of

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<sup>141</sup> *Od.* 4.52-58, 7.84-102.

Odysseus' house that the suitors could equip their entire number from what was displayed (*Od.* 19.4-13).<sup>142</sup> The display of items of treasure and arms within the houses of *basileis* was intended to impress guests, and, as power was attained through personal prowess and wealth, this display demonstrated the extent of the power of the host.

Feasting increased the host's prestige and allowed him to display his wealth to guests through the treasures on display in his house and his contributions of livestock, wine and other foodstuffs. The feast also placed an obligation on the guests to return his hospitality with favours, and gave the *basileus* an opportunity to distribute largesse to his community. In practical terms this ensured that a Homeric leader could call upon those of his peers who had enjoyed his hospitality, and were under an obligation to him, to perform favours at times of need. This could include military assistance. We have seen that Agamemnon reminded certain warriors that they had feasted at his expense to try and encourage them to fight on his behalf. Feasts were also a form of direct payment in return for services to the leader, as is shown by the actions of Telemachus.

The previous section on slavery showed that the grain and vines cultivated by slaves supplied the bread and wine consumed at these events. The meat is from slaughtered pigs, oxen and sheep which were tended by slaves. These animals were brought in from the countryside to the house of the *basileus* by his slaves to be slaughtered or sacrificed. Free labourers who also worked on the farms were only employed at certain times of the year (*Hes. Op.* 600-604). From the evidence presented in Part III it is clear that the *basileis* absolutely relied on the surplus produced by slave labour to engage in the key practice of feasting.

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<sup>142</sup> van Wees (1995) 149-154.

### *b) Religious Practice*

The conspicuous sacrifice of animals prior to the actual eating and drinking is also significant. Nestor is able to sacrifice nine victims brought in by the communities he rules (*Od.* 3.4-8), and another he has brought to sacrifice to Athene (*Od.* 3.418-463). Agamemnon sacrifices a bull to Zeus, praying for the success of their expedition, then butchers it and the meal is shared between himself, Nestor, Idomeneus, the two Aiantes, Diomedes, Odysseus and Menelaos (*Il.* 2.402-431). Agamemnon makes this sacrifice on behalf of the entire enterprise. Similarly the Trojans offer twelve heifers to Athene, asking the goddess to protect their city, wives and children (*Il.* 6.92-95, 273-278). Alkinoös decides to sacrifice twelve bulls to placate Poseidon, explicitly on behalf of the entire *polis* (*Od.* 13.181-183). When Odysseus tells a lie about organising a raiding party he claims to have given many victims to the crews of his ships to sacrifice and then eat (*Od.* 14.248-252). These animal sacrifices were intended to benefit the immediate community by averting the anger of the gods or by making it more likely that the gods would grant their requests. The fact that, in these examples, the victims were either provided by the *basileis* or gathered on their initiative suggests that the *basileis* fulfilled an important religious role by using their wealth and influence to provide larger sacrifices on behalf of the community.<sup>143</sup> The feasting immediately after the sacrifice of course provided an additional opportunity for the *basileus* to demonstrate his largesse to his followers or the community.

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<sup>143</sup> Mazarakis Ainian (2006) 185: 'In Homer the *basileus* had a significant religious role, apart from a social one. He appears to have been responsible for the celebration of sacrifices and guarantees the preservation of ritual custom (Mondi 1980: 201). Likewise, important religious duties were attached to the kings of the Archaic and Classical *poleis*, regardless of whether these *basileis* were hereditary monarchs or elective officials (Carlier, *Royauté*).'

If these practices reaffirmed the position of the *basileus*, so did his interaction with individuals known as *manteis*. These individuals, such as Calchas and Theoklymenus, recognised signs sent by the gods or knew the gods' will through a special skill or god-given ability. These specialists could recommend specific courses of action at times of indecision or apotropaic rituals to avoid misfortune or catastrophe (*Il.* 1.68-100). The predictions of seers also granted a unique form of legitimacy to the *basileis*. Calchas predicted Agamemnon's victory over Troy (*Il.* 2.300-332). Theoklymenus not only predicts of the suitors (*Od.* 20.351-370) and the return of Odysseus (*Od.* 17.152-161) but that the family of Telemachus will rule Ithaka forever (*Od.* 15.531-534). It seems that the *basileis'* involvement with these individuals and wider religious practice contributed to the justification of their position.

### c) *Marriage*

A further practice by which a Homeric leader could find supporters beyond his immediate community was marriage.<sup>144</sup> An analysis of Homeric marriage practice will not be attempted here.<sup>145</sup> The immediate concern will be with understanding how Homeric marriage fits into the wider picture of the pursuit of power in Homeric society and what the leading men hoped to gain from a favourable marriage. Marriage in Homeric society could involve the exchange of different kinds of gifts between both parties as well as the promise of further marriage-gifts (*hedna*). Gifts

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<sup>144</sup> Whitley (1991a) 364.

<sup>145</sup> See Lacey (1966) 60, for the distinction between *dora* and *hedna*. Lacey identified two patterns of Homeric marriage. In the first a father or guardian would receive gifts (*dora*) and assurances of *hedna* in return for the potential bride. The *dora* would be accepted from all the suitors, but only the successful suitor's *hedna* would be accepted. The bride would then leave for the husband's house accompanied by her *hedna*, supplied by her family. In the second, a 'son-in-law' would move into the home of the bride's father, or very nearby, and as serve as a 'man-at-arms' for the *basileus*.



might be given by the groom to the bride's father (*dora*), or a bride might be exchanged for some form of service to her family.<sup>146</sup> A fortunate groom might have been so favoured by the bride's father that he received his bride without paying any gifts himself, and even received gifts along with his bride. In some cases wives moved into the house of their new husband, in others the groom moved into the house of his wife's father. Two potential grooms, Othryoneus and Achilles, are explicitly told that, under certain conditions, they will receive their bride *anahednon* (Othryoneus and Achilles would not be required to give *hedna*). The examples found in the poems vary, and this variation should not be seen as problematic or as evidence for a poetic accumulation of marriage practices spanning many centuries.<sup>147</sup> Like the general pursuit of wealth and power in Homeric society, the diversity of practice suggests that there was no widely recognised 'system' regulating marriage and certainly no legal code in place. Marriages must have varied in nature along with the current needs and desires of the participants and their available resources.<sup>148</sup> Van Wees, writing on Megara at the time of Theognis, has stated that friendship 'is more than an emotional bond for Theognis; it is also, and primarily, an instrumental relationship in which benefits are shared and reciprocated.'<sup>149</sup> Something similar could be said of Homeric marriages. In the epics it is clear that the groom and the bride's family seek to benefit from the arrangement. Marriage alliances certainly ensured that a powerful man could call on a wider network of friends and family in

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<sup>146</sup> Westbrook (2005) 3-23, has argued that kingship, as an office, may also be passed through a dowry. Westbrook cites examples from Biblical and Near Eastern sources as parallels.

<sup>147</sup> Snodgrass (1974) 118, has argued for the opposite, that 'Homer is describing a mixture of practices, derived from a diversity of historical sources.' In his study Snodgrass recognises two forms of exchange, 'bridewealth' and 'dowry'. Another complex analysis of Homeric marriage, and opposed to Snodgrass, can be found in Morris (1986) 105-115. Morris denies that Homeric marriage was a 'rigid institution' and argues for more flexibility in the practice.

<sup>148</sup> This generally agrees with Donlan's (1989) 4, summary of marriage practice within the wider pursuit of power: 'optionality in post-nuptial residence and gift arrangements is quite consistent with the fluid power relations within the epics.'

<sup>149</sup> van Wees (2000a) 54.

times of need.<sup>150</sup> In the more extreme cases of Nestor and Priam, the result is that they can call upon an extended family to perform various tasks and go to war on their behalf, as some grooms had moved into the house of the bride's father. In Priam's case especially his children and sons-in-law are relied upon to fight for the city. Sarpedon reminds Hektor that 'you said once that without companions and without people you could hold this city alone, with only your brothers and the lords of your sisters' (*Il.* 5.472-474).<sup>151</sup> This passage indicates the importance of children and allies obtained through marriage as future fighters. Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, asks Telemachus if his brothers have failed to support him against the suitors. Odysseus' expectation implies that male relatives were regularly called upon as fighters. He also states 'For I myself once promised to be a man of prosperity, but, giving way to force and violence, did many reckless things, because I relied on my father and brothers' (*Od.* 18.138-140). Odysseus clearly believes that a man will be encouraged to carry out violent acts by the knowledge that he had the military support of his male relatives. The significance of male relatives as warriors is reflected in Laertes' joy at seeing his son and grandson equipped for war and boasting of their valour. 'What day is this for me, dear gods? I am very happy. My son and my son's son are contending over their courage' (*Od.* 24.514-515). Marriage of course also produced legitimate children (*gnesioi*) who could inherit their father's property on his death. The use of bastard children (*nothoi*), in a military capacity, as attendants for the legitimate offspring, is a phenomenon that appears on a number of occasions in Homer. Although these children do not appear to have inherited property in the same manner as their legitimate siblings they were put to use. The

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<sup>150</sup> See Finley (1956) 99. For gifts in marriage in particular: 66, 90. See also Donlan (1989) 4: 'This is very clear in respect to the marital transactions of the Homeric elite, among whom marriages, both within and outside the demos, were political alliances, carrying with them long term obligations of reciprocal service.'

<sup>151</sup> Donlan (2007) 34. This idea is also present in McGlew (1989) 286.

chariot of Antiphos, a legitimate son of Priam, is driven by Isos, one of Priam's bastard sons. The chariot of Hektor is also driven by his bastard brother, Kebriones (*Il.* 16.737-738). Demokoön, a bastard son of Priam, comes to Troy from Abydos to fight the Achaians (*Il.* 4.499). Another of Priam's illegitimate sons, Doryklos, is killed by Aias (*Il.* 11.489-490). Another bastard, Pedaios, son of Antenor, is killed fighting for the Trojan cause (*Il.* 5.69). Some, such as Medon the son of Oïleus, were able to lead parties of warriors themselves (*Il.* 2.727). The example of Medon and of other bastards such as Teukros shows that the status of a bastard was no impediment to gaining authority on the battlefield or to being treated respectfully. Teukros is shown particular favour by Agamemnon who offers him presents for his service (*Il.* 8.281-291). *Nothoi* were also not excluded from favourable marriages. Menelaos secures a marriage for Megapenthes, his son by a slave woman, to Alektor's daughter (*Od.* 4.10-12). Bastard daughters were also of use. Priam's illegitimate daughter Medesikaste was married to Imbrios, who moves into Priam's household and fights for him (*Il.* 13.170-176). In this final example Priam's military capacity was increased through a marriage. There does not appear to have been any stigma attached to using bastard children within the traditional means of gaining power. They do, however, appear in a subordinate role to the *gnesioi*.

The promise of marriage into a powerful family could provide military allies in the form of suitors seeking to impress the bride's kinsmen. Othryoneus of Kabesos agrees to fight on the side of Troy in return for a guarantee of marriage to Priam's daughter Cassandra. We are told that Othryoneus was freed from any obligation to pay *hedna* to the bride's family (*Il.* 13.363-369). Able men like Othryoneus who might be an asset to the *basileus* could be encouraged to marry into a powerful family and move into the home of the bride's father, as is the case with

Priam's large household. Alkinoös, impressed by Odysseus, also offers presents and a house to Odysseus to encourage him to marry Nausikaa and remain in Phaiakia (*Od.* 7.311-315). Bellerophon is awarded a piece of land by Proitos' father-in-law along with his daughter in marriage. 'Then when the king knew him for the powerful stock of the god, he detained him there, and offered him the hand of his daughter, and gave him half of all the *times basileidos* (*Il.* 6.191-195). Achilles, along with a marriage to one of Agamemnon's daughters, is offered a vast amount of treasure, slaves and land (*Il.* 9.141-156). Some of these examples show that a groom could receive land, wealth and authority through affiliation with a powerful household along with his bride. Men like Achilles, Bellerophon and Othryoneus are fine warriors and obviously of use to their potential bride's father. In the case of Odysseus, he simply impressed a great man and won his favour, causing him to offer his daughter along with numerous presents to encourage Odysseus to remain with him. 'O father Zeus...how I wish that, being the man you are and thinking the way I do, you could have my daughter and be called my son-in-law, staying here with me (*Od.* 7.311-314). For those suitors who did not receive their bride *anahednon*, the process of securing a favourable marriage is depicted as potentially expensive and highly competitive. The suitors delivered gifts (*dora*) to the bride's father and increased their offers of *hedna* in what must have been a series of increasingly expensive attempts to surpass their rivals.<sup>152</sup> Eurymachos, who offered *dora* and *hedna*, appears to have been the most favoured candidate to marry Penelope (*Od.* 15.16-18). The *Odyssey* indicates that Eurymachos' preeminent position among the hopeful suitors is due entirely to his ability to give the most impressive gifts to Penelope's father, and to promise the greatest amount of *hedna*.

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<sup>152</sup> Lacey (1966) 57.

The benefits of marriage to both parties were tangible and mutually beneficial. The exchange of wealth could greatly increase the property of the groom, and the father of the bride might receive many precious gifts from suitors seeking his favour. The simple act of exchanging such great quantities of wealth must have been impressive in itself. The gifts of the suitor to the bride's father, as well as his offer of *hedna*, and the presents from the bride's family to the groom, could be composed of livestock, slaves and treasure.<sup>153</sup> These exchanges could be extensive, involving the transmission of entire herds of animals, as well as slaves and metalwork.<sup>154</sup> To secure his marriage, Iphidamas gives one hundred oxen and promises a further thousand goats and sheep (*Il.* 11.244-245).<sup>155</sup> The produce of slave labour is clearly used to feast the bride's family and provide them with gifts, a practice mentioned by Penelope, as well as supplying the bride's family with the means to pay gifts to the successful suitor. The great expense of this practice illustrates its significance to those who took part in it. The increase it brought to a *basileus'* power and prestige is apparent from the evidence above.

#### d) *Xenoi*

Allies could be found through the practice of guest-friendship. *Xenoi* (guest-friends) could be created through exchanging appropriate gifts, as do Odysseus and Iphitos when they form their *xenosune* (*Od.* 21.13-35). *Xenoi* could also be inherited. A

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<sup>153</sup> See Finley (1981) 233-245, for an argument against the 'purchasing' of a bride and a discussion of the meaning of *hedna*. See Westbrook (2005), for a rejection of Finley's concept of equal exchange. Westbrook, however, assumes that there existed an office of 'king' in Homeric society.

<sup>154</sup> *Od.* 18.275-279 'the behaviour of these suitors is not as it was in time past when suitors desired to pay their court to a noble woman and daughter of a rich man, and rival each other. Such men themselves bring in their own cattle and fat sheep, to feast the family of the bride, and offer glorious presents.'

<sup>155</sup> This is what caused Donlan (1997a) 657, to conclude that: 'Although animals had commercial use, they functioned mainly as social wealth in Homer, given away as marriage gifts, guest-gifts (horses), or as rewards and prizes.'

number of individuals in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* speak of inheriting older *xenos* relationships.<sup>156</sup> An individual was obliged to treat a *xenos* in a certain way. This usually manifests in the epics as the provision of portions of food and drink, entertainment and lodging, gift-exchange, and general assistance. There is also pressure to ensure that a *xenos* enjoys physical protection. Telemachus laments his inability to perform this particular function. ‘For how shall I take and entertain a *xenos* in my house? I myself am young and have no faith in my hand’s strength to defend a man, if anyone else picks a quarrel with him’ (*Od.* 16.69-72). The heroes appear to regard the concept of conflict or confrontation with a *xenos* as deeply inappropriate, Diomedes and Glaukus being the most obvious example of this. Odysseus challenges the Phaiakians to compete with him, ‘any of the Phaiakians, that is, except Laodamas himself, for he is my *xenos*; who would fight with his friend?’ (*Od.* 8.207-208). Although Odysseus could be speaking sarcastically, as Laodamas had insulted him, the point still stands. Menelaos is also careful not to detain Telemachus against his will and even criticises the host who entertains a guest for too long and prevents him from carrying on with his journey (*Od.* 15.68-74). The harming of a *xenos* was clearly regarded as contrary to accepted norms as the story of Herakles’ murder of Iphitos makes clear. ‘[Iphitos] came to the son of Zeus...the man called Herakles...who killed Iphitos while he was a *xenos* in his household; hard man, without shame for the watchful gods’ (*Od.* 21.25-28). In the *Odyssey* the *xenos* relationship is clearly depicted as something of inherent value to those that practice it. As Peisistratos says to Telemachus, ‘For a *xenos* remembers all his days the man who received him as a *xeinodokos* receives a guest, and gave him the gifts of friendship’ (*Od.* 15.54-55). Alkinoös states that, to a good man ‘his suppliant and

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<sup>156</sup> *Il.* 6.215-236. *Od.* 1.187-188, 15.196-197, 17.522, 24.105-114.

*xenos* is as good as a brother to him' (*Od.* 8.547). Harpalion and Sarpedon are *xenoi* of Paris and Hektor respectively and fight with them against the Achaians (*Il.* 13.660-661, *Il.* 17.150). It is clear that a *xenos* relationship represented safety, sustenance and a potential source of favours. Military assistance may also have been implied. As Herman notes, these were essentially private relationships, created between private individuals without the consent of the wider community.<sup>157</sup>

#### e) *Gift-giving and Largesse*

The giving of gifts marks some of the most splendid occasions in the epics. They are given as prizes, recompense, as compensation for loss or offence, and given or promised as rewards for services to a powerful man. They are given as parting-gifts to *xenoi* and are expected to be returned with something of equal value. Gifts could take many forms, including unworked gold and silver, bronze, weapons and armour, cloth, slaves and livestock.<sup>158</sup> Hektor laments the loss of all the treasure from Troy, as this has been sent away to satisfy their allies. Hektor mentions gold and bronze items in particular as having been given away (*Il.* 18.289-292). When Hektor wishes to encourage these allies to fight, he reminds those who have received gifts from him of their obligation, 'with such a purpose I wear out my own people for presents and food, wherewith I make strong the spirit within each one of you' (*Il.* 17.225-226). Odysseus' crew grumble that he has amassed a fortune while they 'who have gone through everything he has on the same venture, come home with our hands empty'

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<sup>157</sup> Herman (1987) 2.

<sup>158</sup> For a study of gift-giving in Homer, and the language of gift-giving, see Donlan (1993) 160: 'Thus, in Homeric, as in virtually all archaic societies, gift-giving is a social mechanism of the highest importance. Among the elite particularly, the complicated etiquette of the gift - who gives, who takes, - and under what circumstances-is enlisted as a major competitive strategy, to demonstrate, and even to establish, gradations in status and authority.'

(*Od.* 10.41-42). Here, the crew refer to the booty from Troy and the gifts given to Odysseus by Aiolos. It seems that gifts given by guest-friends, as well as plunder, were liable to be redistributed. The promise of material reward could attract allies to fight for another's cause. These rewards were not necessarily always collected from a defeated enemy in the form of battlefield spoil or plunder. Allies could be gathered to provide military assistance through the payment of gifts. Agamemnon offers gifts to warriors on the Achaian side when he witnesses their prowess in battle. Seeing Teukros shooting down Trojans with his bow, Agamemnon states 'first after myself I will put into your hands some great gift of honour; a tripod, or two horses and the chariot with them, or else a woman, who will go up into the same bed with you' (*Il.* 8.289-291). Teukros has been seen by Agamemnon to do two things: display his skill and to destroy Agamemnon's enemies. Although Teukros then boasts that he needs no such encouragement, it is clear that the purpose of Agamemnon's promises is to encourage his followers to fight hard on his behalf. Achilles criticises Agamemnon for taking the treasures, 'goodly and numerous,' plundered from the Troad, giving them out 'little by little' and retaining many for himself (*Il.* 9.330-333). In the same speech Achilles also mentions that 'all the other prizes of honour he (Agamemnon) gave the great men and the princes are held fast by them' (*Il.* 9.334-335). Agamemnon is clearly expected to distribute gifts to the *basileis* who followed him to Troy and those that followed a leader like Agamemnon clearly expected expensive rewards for their services. Although there seems to have been a general practice of rewarding followers with gifts or accumulating followers with the prospect of gifts, the practice was not indiscriminate constantly.<sup>159</sup> Agamemnon rewards individual warriors, such as Teukros, for fighting with particular skill and success.

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<sup>159</sup> For a discussion of the link between distribution of wealth and personal power see Donlan (1982)



To be able to distribute gifts, often treasure, a Homeric leader would have required a store of luxury items, as well as other forms of wealth, such as iron, slaves and livestock. Such a store is in the house of Odysseus. ‘(Telemachus) went down into his father’s high-roofed and wide storeroom, where gold and bronze were lying piled up, and abundant clothing in the bins, and fragrant olive oil, and in it jars of wine’ (*Od.* 2.337-340). To accumulate enough wealth to engage in the practice of gift-giving, a Homeric leader needed sources of luxury items. Violent forms of acquisition were not the only means of collecting these items. The *basileis* did not employ free craftsmen in large numbers or use their slaves to produce high quality metalwork or other goods classed as *keimelion*. Van Wees has pointed out that the exception to this is cloth, which is produced by women and slaves within the household.<sup>160</sup> The silver bowls, bronze cauldrons and other precious items are never seen to be produced within the *oikoi* of men like Odysseus, Menelaos or Nestor. Metalwork must have been acquired in some other way. This could be achieved through plundering or gift-exchange, but it must also have occurred through exchanging surplus produce and there is evidence of this form of exchange in the epics. We have seen that an agricultural surplus was produced by the slaves owned by the *basileis*. Euneos is able to exchange wine for bronze and iron (*Il.* 7.473), and Phoenician traders exchange their ‘countless pretty things’ for *biotos* (means of living, substance) (*Od.* 15.456). Odysseus, in disguise, claims that the treasure he has stored away ‘would feed (*boskoi*) a succession of heirs to the tenth generation’ (*Od.* 14.325, 19.293-295). In these cases trinkets and items of bronze, iron and gold are exchanged for agricultural produce.<sup>161</sup> Surplus agricultural produce was used to acquire luxury items and metalwork, and represents an additional method of

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<sup>160</sup> van Wees (1992) 227.

<sup>161</sup> van Wees (1992) 52, 226. See also Donlan (1981) 105.

acquiring these goods. It is very difficult to understand how a Homeric leader could possibly come into possession of the necessary quantities of agricultural produce and luxury items to successfully perform the social practices expected of him, without his slaves.<sup>162</sup>

*f) Athletic Competition*

One of the most impressive displays of gift-giving in the *Iliad* is during the funeral games for Patroklos, although athletic competitions organised on a whim for pleasure and entertainment, such as those on Phaiakia (*Od.* 7.100-233) or the contests the suitors prepared for themselves (*Od.* 4.626-627, 17.167-169), do not seem to have involved expensive prize-giving. Athletic competition has been seen by van Wees as an environment in which ‘aggressive behaviour’ might surface.<sup>163</sup> Although this is probably true, the role of the host as arbitrator of the competition, and therefore responsible for appeasing injured honour and pacifying violent outbursts, is of greater interest. The other significant areas of interest are the display of fairness and generosity by the host, the distribution of wealth at these events, and the value of these prizes to the standing of the host and competitors.

Achilles lists the contests that a wealthy man might be expected to take part in as boxing, wrestling, spear-throwing and racing (*Il.* 23.621-623). There is also a chariot race at the funeral games of Patroklos. During these contests Achilles is careful to maintain the reputations of certain individuals. Nestor is given a prize by Achilles despite being too old to compete (*Il.* 23.618-623). The need to treat friends

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<sup>162</sup> Murray (1983) 196, also makes the connection between surplus agricultural produce and the increase of personal power.

<sup>163</sup> van Wees (1992) 91.

and peers respectfully, and to award them gifts that signify honour, extends into athletic competition. As much as Agamemnon's gifts to the *basileis* that follow him at Troy, or the invitations to feasts, games were an opportunity to establish and reinforce relationships with valuable friends and allies. Achilles is also seen to act in concord with the wishes of the spectators, deciding to give a gift to Eumelos, although he finished the race in last place (*Il.* 23.536-38). The Achaians commend Achilles' decision. 'So he spoke, and all gave approval to what he was urging, and he would have given him the horse, since all the Achaians approved' (*Il.* 23.539-541). During the combat in armour between Diomedes and Aias, the Achaians call for the combat to end, fearing for Aias' safety. Achilles does not oppose this and divides the prizes evenly, except for a sword which he gives to Diomedes (*Il.* 23.822-825). Achilles, as the host, is also responsible for resolving quarrels and disagreements between the participants. He resolves the argument between Aias and Idomeneus (*Il.* 23.492-498), and successfully addresses Antilochus' staunch refusal to give up his prize to Eumelos (*Il.* 23.543-565). Despite the significance of honouring peers and followers, justice and fair-play in athletic competition is clearly expected to be upheld. An indignant Menelaos, claiming to have been cheated, asks 'O leaders of the Argives...judge between the two of us now; and without favour; so that no man of the bronze-armoured Achaians shall say of us: Menelaos using lies and force against Antilochos went off with the mare and won, for his horses were far slower but he himself was greater in power and degree' (*Il.* 23.573-578). Achilles also stops the wrestling match between Aias and Odysseus, seeing they are so evenly matched, and promises equal prizes to both (*Il.* 23.735-737). Despite the very personal nature of authority at this time, the practice of athletic competition required the maintenance of justice by rewarding competitors according to merit.

The loss of items of treasure, slaves, metalwork and livestock at these events could only be sustained by a man in possession of a significant amount of wealth and the spectators must have been aware of this. The simple act of giving so many luxurious prizes must have been impressive and, like the practice of feasting, the display of the host's wealth was an important end in itself. Achilles brought 'prizes for games out of his ships, cauldrons and tripods, and horses and mules and the powerful high heads of cattle and fair-girdled women and grey iron' (*Il.* 23.259-261). These prizes are displayed conspicuously before the thousands of spectators in a manner reminiscent of Agamemnon's gifts to Achilles. That Achilles brought these things from his ships also suggests that he either carried them off as plunder or was awarded them by his friends or followers at Troy. Games were also an ideal opportunity for a Homeric leader to demonstrate the extent of his wealth to the spectators and presented an opportunity to honour his friends and peers with additional gifts, as does Achilles when he gives a prize to Nestor (*Il.* 23.618). Athletic competition provided an opportunity for the sponsor to demonstrate his fairness and ability to reward skill and success. Like Agamemnon's honouring of Teukros on the battlefield with the promise of a gift, the host could honour individuals who performed well in the competition or for participating in a dangerous contest like boxing or wrestling. It is significant that the host was seen to do this conspicuously, before a crowd of spectators. For example, each time Achilles resolved a dispute, honoured an individual, or conformed to the collective will of the assembled Achaians, he did so in full view of his peers and the spectators.

g) *Protection payments*

The final social practice to be discussed in this section is that of protection payments. Harris has identified this practice in the Homeric poems and identified instances of its continued existence in sixth-century Attica.<sup>164</sup> *Basileis* received payments on the understanding that they would protect their people from attack and generally maintain order among the communities they ruled. The return that the people ideally received for their gifts was twofold: firstly the *basileus* became their military leader and protector, placing himself at the head of his people in battle, and secondly he became an arbitrator. The portions of land and food mentioned by Sarpedon are representative of this phenomenon. ‘Glaukos, why is it you and I are honoured before others with pride of place, the choice meats and the filled wine cups in Lykia, and all men look on us as if we were immortals, and we are appointed a great piece of land by the banks of Xanthos...Therefore it is our duty in the forefront of the Lykians to take our stand, and bear our part of the blazing of battle’ (*Il.* 12.310-316). Sarpedon’s speech revolves around the core of this practice: the *basileis* fight in the forefront of battle, in return for this they possess plenty of land and they are given the means to eat and drink. It is in relation to this practice that Agamemnon scolds Menestheus and Odysseus. ‘For you two it is becoming to stand among the foremost fighters, and endure your share of the blaze of battle; since indeed you two are first to hear of the feasting whenever we Achaians make ready a feast of the elders. There it is your pleasure to eat the roast flesh, to drink as much as you please the cups of wine...’ (*Il.* 4.341-346). Agamemnon describes a practice identical to that described by Sarpedon: the Achaians provide Menestheus and Odysseus with food and drink, therefore they should fight hard at the front. In the *Iliad* Priam abuses his surviving

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<sup>164</sup> Harris (1997) 57.

sons and calls them ‘the plunderers of their own people in their land of lambs and kids’ (*Il.* 24.261-262). Priam is not accusing his sons of thievery in the literal sense, but is stating that they are undeserving of their privileges because they are poor warriors.<sup>165</sup>

As well as engaging in combat, the *basileus* would also maintain order among their people, pass judgements and uphold *themistes*; the customary norms of the community. This practice is hinted at when Achilles is offered a number of towns by Agamemnon. ‘All these lie near the sea, at the bottom of sandy Pylos, and men live among them rich in cattle and rich in sheepflocks, who will honour you as if you were a god with gifts given and fulfil your prospering *themistas* underneath your sceptre’ (*Il.* 9.295-298). Achilles will give these people commands and they will pay him for keeping order. In Hesiod we also see this practice in action, although Hesiod grumbled about the gift-devouring *basileis* because they were not, in his view, fulfilling their part of this arrangement by giving him justice (*Op.* 38-39). The ability of the *basileis* to collect gifts from their people is mentioned on several other occasions in Homer. In Book 17 of the *Iliad* Hektor states that he does ‘wear down my own people for presents and food’ (*Il.* 17.225-226). Alkinoös suggests that he and the other *basileis* make a collection from the Phaiakians, to make up for the expensive gifts they gave to Odysseus (*Od.* 13.13-15). Odysseus in disguise pretends to have once entertained Odysseus in Crete. To do this he states that he collected barley, wine and cattle from the people (*Od.* 19.197-198).<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> van Wees (1992) 86: ‘Priamos’ sons do not go round at dead of night stealing the citizens’ livestock. Presumably, the people *give* them sheep and goats to slaughter and eat. The difference is that Priamos...declares that his sons *do not deserve* these gifts, because they are ‘best’ only at dancing – not in battle, as Hektor was, and as princes in general are supposed to be.’

<sup>166</sup> van Wees (1992) 35.

The Homeric poems do not depict formal institutions such as organised citizen-militias or publicly appointed generals to counter external aggression, or public courts and magistrates to maintain internal order. Instead, an informal arrangement of protection payments existed between the *basileis* and their people through which the people would gain military protection and the maintenance of good order. Performing their part of the arrangement enabled *basileis* to collect gifts and food from their people, as well as portions of prime agricultural land. This practice may be what Telemachus refers to in the *Odyssey*. ‘It is not bad to be *basileuemen*. Speedily the king’s house grows prosperous, and he himself has rank beyond others’ (*Od.* 1.392-393). Although Telemachus does not specify exactly how being a *basileus* made one rich it is most likely that he is referring to the practice of protection payments. As Odysseus’ Cretan tale proves that raiding for wealth was not a practice restricted to *basileis* (*Od.* 14.229-234), and Telemachus is specifically referring to the wealth acquired by simply *being* a *basileus*, it is unlikely he is referring to wealth violently seized through raiding. As Telemachus is referring to the wealth amassed through a practice exclusively undertaken by *basileis*, he is most likely referring to protection payments.

Laertes is an interesting case regarding this practice. His situation is that of a man whose age and lack of militarily effective male relatives has compelled him to ‘retire’ from ruling and stopped him from pursuing the lifestyle of the *basileus*. He is described as poor and wearing patchy clothes, and Odysseus even compares his appearance to that of a slave. It is certain that Laertes no longer leads raids or fights at the head of his people as his old shield, rusted and with a broken strap, is retrieved from a storeroom by the slave Melanthius (*Od.* 22.184-185). Laertes explains that he had been lord of the Kephallenians in days past and had captured a settlement on the

mainland called Nerikos (*Od.* 24.376-379). Laertes had clearly engaged with the kind of military practices expected of a *basileus*. Although Achilles feared for the safety and status of his aged father, Peleus the poet does not speak of Laertes suffering any such predatory assaults on his person or property in the absence of Odysseus. However, it is obvious that Laertes no longer holds a position of authority over his people and his poverty strongly suggests that he no longer receives protection payments. He could not, after all, perform his part of the practice by offering military leadership because of his age. The practice of protection payments has, in the case of Laertes, ceased to function. Laertes' situation should be contrasted with that of Priam. Priam, though old, could maintain his wealth and status and continue to collect the payments through his many male relatives. The payments made to Priam's family appear on several occasions in the *Iliad* and have already been discussed (*Il.* 17.225-226, 24.261-262). Laertes has no such support as Odysseus has been absent and Telemachus was too young to take part in the practice. As a consequence he lives in relative poverty, takes no active role in ruling the people, and does not engage in the practices associated with a *basileus*, such as gift-giving, feasting, or hosting games.

### *Conclusion*

The personal achievements, wealth, strength and prowess of the Homeric leader earned, justified and maintained his power and status. We have seen that military success could raise a man from relatively humble status to a position of authority and power, although he was compelled to maintain that position by fighting for himself and on behalf of his community. If, like Priam, he was too old to engage in combat a



*basileus* needed family and allies to fight on his behalf. When he was unable to maintain his position through military success, private wealth and active engagement with social practices, his status was no defence against predatory attack and his position eventually became unsustainable. War and raiding brought *basileis* treasure and other spoil which they could distribute among their communities and their followers to reward their services and encourage future cooperation. It also brought the slaves they needed to produce the surplus required to engage in the social practices of the elite. The slaves laboured to produce the foodstuffs consumed at the feasts or exchanged for the precious luxury objects given as gifts at important events or to secure a desirable marriage. The practice of marriage could increase the groom's wealth and status, and could provide the bride's family with a valuable ally as well as an influx of wealth from hopeful suitors. The giving of generous gifts placed an obligation on the recipient to perform favours for the *basileus*. They were also given as payment for past services and rewards for particular tasks. These encouraged cooperation with the *basileus* and served to highlight the giver's wealth and generosity. These practices, funded by plunder and the produce of slaves, cemented the leader's position at the head of his people and among his peers by increasing and fortifying his personal power. The potentially dangerous situations of Peleus, Telemachus and Astyanax, as well as 'Cretan' Odysseus' rise to power, clearly show that the position of a Homeric leader was not hereditary,<sup>167</sup> but based on personal success.<sup>168</sup> The terrible vulnerability of Peleus, Telemachus and Astyanax argues forcefully against any kind of formal, hereditary 'office' of leadership in Homeric society. Although a Homeric leader might wish to pass his

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<sup>167</sup> For a discussion that includes birth and hereditary right as a qualification for leadership in Homeric society see Raaflaub (1997) 633-634. Ulf (1990) has strongly opposed the traditional view of inherited status among Homeric leaders.

<sup>168</sup> See McGlew (1989) 287-288, and his conclusion regarding Agamemnon's status.

possessions to his son (*Od.* 7.149-150), the maintenance and increase of the son's power and status relied upon his own ability. This is made clear by the condition of Telemachus (*Od.* 1.392-398). There was no 'office' of ruler in Homeric society and there was certainly no hereditary monarchy that could be automatically passed from father to son by hereditary right. Scholars have struggled to define the status of the Homeric 'king' as a formal, constitutional phenomenon, because no such institution ever existed.<sup>169</sup> Power in Homeric society rested on popular support sustained by military prestige and the constant giving of gifts. Despite the wealth and power of *basileis* they were anxious to retain popular support and feared losing it. Athene, disguised as Mentor, criticises the Ithakans for not checking the excesses of the suitors, implying they had the power to do so (*Od.* 2.239-241). The father of Antinoös fled for his life when the people attempted to lynch him for raiding their friends, the Thesprontians (*Od.* 16.424-429). When Odysseus informs his father he has killed the suitors he admits to being deeply troubled by the potential consequences. 'But now I am terribly afraid in my heart that speedily the men of Ithaka may come against us here' (*Od.* 24.353-354). By distributing plunder, holding feasts, defending their people and maintaining order, Homeric leaders could retain popular support and their people would have seen a return for their payments of gifts to the *basileus*.

Within the broad range of methods used to gain power individual Homeric leaders built their power and wielded it according to their own means and abilities. Agamemnon is depicted as a wealthy and powerful warrior with many friends and allies, and ultimately secures his position over the Achaian army by redistributing booty and giving precious gifts to the other *basileis*. Priam is not depicted as a

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<sup>169</sup> See in particular Geddes (1984) 17-36.

warrior, his age prevents him from fighting, but his wealth and the prowess of his many sons and numerous male relatives maintains his position. Odysseus rules over a poor and rocky land, but he is intelligent, cunning and a very capable fighter. These examples demonstrate that power in Homeric society was personal.

## Chapter II: Archaic Society

Archaic tyranny represented a continuation of Homeric practices and the Archaic tyrants used the same methods to gain and maintain power as the Homeric *basileis*. This chapter will explain why traditional theories regarding the ‘crises’ of the Archaic period are flawed and conclude that the real problems of the age were corruption and violence often fuelled by the desire of the powerful to accumulate wealth and slaves. The phenomenon that changed the attitude of many Greeks towards the old style of leadership practised by the *basileis* and caused them to label these men as ‘tyrants’ was the rule of law. To understand the rise of the rule of law it is necessary to identify the problems that it confronted and this chapter will begin by identifying and describing these issues. The poetry of the Archaic period, particularly that of Theognis and Solon, has often been interpreted as reflecting a period of crisis and has been used as evidence for identifying the problems that caused this supposed crisis. These problems have frequently been identified as overpopulation in the Archaic *poleis*, the rise of a *nouveau riche* who challenged the traditional landed aristocracy for power and, in the case of Solon’s Attica, dissatisfaction with an oppressive and exploitative system of land tenure. The supposed rise of a hoplite middle-class, composed of newly propertied soldiers whose sudden contribution to warfare prompted them to become politically aware, has also been identified as a cause of strife between traditional nobles and the newly politically aware middle-classes. The rule of law did not, however, emerge as a solution to these specific problems as none of these theories are supported by the evidence. Each of these theories has been decisively challenged in recent years by new discoveries and approaches to the evidence. This is significant because none of these theories could, therefore, be responsible for the rise of tyranny in seventh-

century Greece. A summary of recent scholarship and a careful examination of the evidence will show that none of these theories fits the evidence before passing on to identify the actual problems that existed in Archaic Greece. The actual crises faced by Solon and his Archaic contemporaries were violence, disorder, greed, and corruption within the administration of justice. Nor were these problems new at the time of Solon as they can be found in Homer and Hesiod. The society in which these poets lived, and the social norms that they practised, incentivised powerful individuals to abuse their position and plunder the countryside in order to accumulate wealth.<sup>170</sup>

*a) Increasing Population*

A barrier to understanding the problems faced by the Archaic Greeks is the assumption that they laboured under the burden of excess population, a phenomenon frequently used to explain the tensions and disorders of the period. ‘Excess’ population has been taken to mean a level of population large enough to cause violent competition over land and a surge of popular resentment from a largely disenfranchised mass against their traditional rulers. So entrenched has this idea become that Scheidel has observed that many scholars begin with the *assumption* that a population explosion occurred rather than an impartial review of the evidence.<sup>171</sup> The idea of a dramatic population explosion often finds support in the conclusions of Snodgrass regarding Archaic burial practices. Snodgrass concluded that the number of burials in Attica and Argos rose dramatically after about 800 and

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<sup>170</sup> For the image of the Archaic ruler as a predator see Brock (2013) 90.

<sup>171</sup> Scheidel (2003) 131: ‘Reduced to essentials, their argument is that because explosive expansion occurred, it must be discernible in the sources. The issue in need of substantiation is taken as a given.’

that this reflected a substantial rise in the general population.<sup>172</sup> Snodgrass went so far as to suggest that the population in one area of Attica ‘may have multiplied itself by a factor of approximately seven’ between 780 and 720;<sup>173</sup> an absolutely enormous increase. A corresponding rise in the number of graves in the Argolid is presented by Snodgrass as corroboration for the Attic evidence and as justification for searching for the consequences of this supposed population explosion across ‘Greek society’ as a whole.<sup>174</sup> The fact that Greeks began settling overseas from the eighth century has also been cited as evidence for a dramatic increase in population, for example by Andrewes<sup>175</sup> and Graham.<sup>176</sup> Despite the criticisms of Morris the theory of dramatic population growth based on burial data has proven very popular. Burial data is, however, highly problematic as a gauge for population. As noted by Morris, fully excavated cemeteries in the Aegean are few and it is therefore difficult to accept the sweeping demographic conclusions, such as an eighth-century population explosion, that are drawn from such comparatively sparse evidence.<sup>177</sup> The use of burial data as demographic evidence also raises further questions: are the tiny minority of excavated cemeteries representative of the majority of undiscovered or unexcavated Archaic cemeteries? How can Snodgrass’ conclusions be reconciled with an Archaic literary record that never complains of dramatic increases in population? Morris’ suggestion that the increase in archaeologically visible eighth-century burials was probably due to changes in burial custom is preferable,<sup>178</sup> although the important point here is that Archaic burial data is not reliable evidence for a population

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<sup>172</sup> Snodgrass (1977) 11-15. Snodgrass (1971) 417, also sees overpopulation as a factor in Greek overseas settlement.

<sup>173</sup> Snodgrass (1980) 23.

<sup>174</sup> Snodgrass (1980) 24-25.

<sup>175</sup> Andrewes (1956) 79.

<sup>176</sup> Graham (1982) 157-158.

<sup>177</sup> Morris (1987) 75.

<sup>178</sup> Morris (1987) 93-95.

explosion. There are simply too many uncertainties in using burial data as a gauge for population. In addition to this, an attractive and logical alternative explanation has been put forward by Morris and the date from the graves is corroborated by no other form of evidence.

A study relevant to the theory of Archaic Greek population expansion was published by Scheidel in 2003. Scheidel argued against the methodology that identified the supposed population explosion, rejecting the idea that an expansion on so large a scale occurred.<sup>179</sup> Using comparative data and statistical analysis Scheidel offered models for Greek population growth from the Early Iron Age to the Classical period which contradicted the thesis of an Archaic population explosion.<sup>180</sup> Annual growth rates of 1% to 3% are shown to have occurred in situations where growth was encouraged by various factors, such as developing countries receiving external medical knowledge or resource-rich North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries AD.<sup>181</sup> But as such situations are simply not comparable with Archaic Attica and cannot explain how Snodgrass' incredibly high growth rate of 4% per annum could have been possible.<sup>182</sup> Scheidel also tested the reliability of grave evidence as a gauge for population increase and found it to be useless because none of the theories that used burial data to discover demographic growth rates could ever be substantiated due to the lack of any evidence to complement the graves.<sup>183</sup> Although the population may have been increasing in the Archaic period, there is

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<sup>179</sup> Scheidel (2003) 121: 'Whether historical populations ever came close to full saturation level remains doubtful. The balance of the evidence suggests that technological progress and institutional change kept raising the ceiling for demographic growth by incrementally expanding productive capacity. Thus, 'overpopulation' relative to a fixed resource base is unlikely ever to have been a genuine historical phenomenon since even in 'natural fertility' regimes, social conventions will tend to regulate and curb population growth in response to economic opportunities. In reality, contractions of the resource base, not uncontrolled reproduction, were the principal cause of 'overpopulation'.'

<sup>180</sup> Scheidel (2003) 120-126.

<sup>181</sup> Scheidel (2003) 128.

<sup>182</sup> Snodgrass (1977) 13.

<sup>183</sup> Scheidel (2003) 126-131.

simply no firm archaeological evidence for a sudden and meteoric rise in population at this time.

Although there are justifiable concerns inherent in conclusions based on burial data and assumptions about the cause of overseas settlement, recent archaeology has provided evidence which directly contradicts the theory of a dramatic rise in population during the Archaic period. Several important archaeological studies have been published in recent years that have severely undermined the idea of an Archaic population explosion.<sup>184</sup> Bintliff has found confirmed examples of Archaic pottery identified in field surveys to be very rare,<sup>185</sup> and that the density of hamlets and villages does not begin to increase markedly until the late sixth century at the earliest, reaching its peak in the Classical and Hellenistic periods.<sup>186</sup> Snodgrass based his argument on burial data from Attica and Argos, yet in compiling the extensive and intensive survey results for these regions Bintliff found that neither region displayed explosive growth in the Archaic period. For Attica: 'Peripheral rural districts on intensive field survey and analysis of settlement distribution, however, show maximum rural population increase to be late Classical.'<sup>187</sup> This confirmed Scheidel's calculations that suggested that settlement sites actually reach their greatest peak in the fifth and fourth centuries,<sup>188</sup> as well as Garnsey's earlier work on land-use and food supply in Attica, which also concluded that Attica had a much higher population density after the Archaic period.<sup>189</sup> For

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<sup>184</sup> An early and concise rebuttal of the Archaic population explosion theory can be found in Garnsey (1988) 113-117. Garnsey shows the archaeological phenomena used to gauge Archaic population to be of dubious worth, ultimately following Morris by concurring that the variation in the archaeological visibility of graves in the eighth and sixth centuries was due to changes in burial practices.

<sup>185</sup> Bintliff (2006) 323.

<sup>186</sup> Bintliff (2006) 322.

<sup>187</sup> Bintliff (1997) 3.

<sup>188</sup> Scheidel (2003) 124-5.

<sup>189</sup> Garnsey (1988) 90-91.



Argos Bintliff notes that 'Extensive field survey and reviews of excavated and published sites indicate a Classical to Early Hellenistic climax, with significant anticipation in high Archaic site numbers. Intensive survey in the sw district, however, combined with urban excavation, gives stronger emphasis to late Classical and early Hellenistic settlement growth and climax. In contrast, limited intensive survey in the Argive heartland also suggests precocious rural development in Archaic times. We might generalize to suggest a general late Classical to early Hellenistic climax, with perhaps significant growth in Archaic times in the Plain of Argos and its hinterland, and takeoff seen later in more peripheral areas.'<sup>190</sup> The study of Jameson, Runnels and van Andel on the archaeology of the southern Argolid finds no dramatic increase in the number of settlements nor dramatic intensification of farming in the Archaic period. In fact the number of known small sites, probably farms, increases from 16 in the Archaic to 22 in the Classical period, reaching a far higher 87 in the Late Classical/Early Hellenistic periods.<sup>191</sup> Considering the increased size of population in the Classical and Hellenistic periods in comparison to the Archaic it is unlikely, if not impossible, for Archaic Greek populations to have reached such a level that they could not be supported by their territory or suffer internal strife due to competition for farmland. For settlement density to have increased so dramatically in the centuries after the Archaic period there must have been land available. Furthermore, Frederiksen has noted that walled towns increase most dramatically in number from the sixth century to about 479, which is far too late to account for a rise in population in the Archaic period, particularly the eighth and seventh centuries.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Bintliff (1997) 4.

<sup>191</sup> Jameson, Runnels and van Andel (1994) 548-549.

<sup>192</sup> Frederiksen (2011) 201-202.

There is no evidence for overpopulation in Archaic poetry or in Herodotus. If such a phenomenon was so critical and created such devastating problems for the Archaic Greeks it is curious that these writers omitted it entirely. An argument against an Archaic population explosion cannot, however, be made from the silence of the sources alone. A useful phenomenon to test if overpopulation was a major problem at this time is Greek overseas settlement. Snodgrass believed that Greek overseas settlements were created due to population growth and 'land-hunger'.<sup>193</sup> However, the sources simply do not reflect a situation in which Greeks left home due to population pressure. Instead they describe a range of other motivating factors. The settlement at Cyrene was founded by settlers who were compelled to leave to mitigate the effects of a severe drought or at the command of an oracle (Hdt. 4.151). The settlement then grew in size when the original settlers offered land to immigrants who were encouraged by a further oracle from Delphi (Hdt. 4.159). Cyrene then created a settlement elsewhere on the North African coast with political malcontents unhappy with the situation at home (Hdt. 4.160). The Spartan Doreius attempted to found settlements in Libya and Italy because he was indignant at being excluded from the office of king (Hdt. 5.42-43). Miltiades of Athens emigrated to the Chersonese because he was unhappy with the rule of the Pisistratids (Hdt. 6.35). A community leaving their homeland due to troublesome neighbours or imminent danger is a phenomenon that also appears in Homer. The grandson of Herakles resettles his entire community in Rhodes because he murdered Herakles' uncle (*Od.* 2.661-670), and the father of Alcinoös resettles his people in Phaiakia to escape the

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<sup>193</sup> A summary of the field survey results that contradict Snodgrass can be found in Foxhall (1997) 127: 'This pattern hardly suggests over-population or a landscape approaching its carrying capacity in the Archaic period. The assertions that this is a period of extensification into marginal agricultural lands...receive little support from archaeological survey evidence. Rather, such extensification seems to start no earlier than the late sixth century, and is more generally a fifth-, and fourth century phenomenon across Greece.... The evidence of survey suggests anything but an overcrowded countryside in the Archaic period.'

aggression of the Cyclopes (*Od.* 6.5-10). Herodotus likewise describes the Samians leaving their island for Sicily to escape from Persian domination and their tyrant Aeaces, an expedition that was joined by those Milesians that escaped the sack of their city (Hdt. 6.22-23).

A large number of settlements, particularly around the Black Sea and the Hellespont, have produced archaeological evidence that confirms these were trading centres, suggesting that profit and opportunism was also a driving factor behind overseas settlement. Tandy, for example, has suggested this factor as the prime motive for Greek settlement overseas.<sup>194</sup> Tandy presents sites such as Pithekoussai and Naxos that appear to have been founded to profit from trade rather than agriculture, being located on known trade routes, provided with harbours or without (or with only limited access to) fertile land.<sup>195</sup> Settling fertile plains and agriculturally rich regions would surely be more logical if the Greeks were struggling to support an oversized population. Instead, as noted by Boardman, they settled in places that provided opportunities for trade.<sup>196</sup> Cook, followed by Graham, argued that Pithekoussai was founded for agriculture, ultimately basing this conclusion on a comment of Strabo (Strab. 5.247).<sup>197</sup> Tandy has countered this with the claim that ‘the volcanic land is good only for vines’.<sup>198</sup> Pithekoussai is also the earliest known Greek settlement in the West, and Cook does not explain why the settlers passed over the obviously more fertile lands available in southern Italy and Sicily that were much closer to Greece. The overseas settlements of the Archaic

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<sup>194</sup> Tandy (1997) 75-83.

<sup>195</sup> Tandy (1997) 66-71, 76-78. Note the unattractive description of Thasos given by Archilochus (Archil. 21-22 [West]).

<sup>196</sup> Boardman (1999) 162.

<sup>197</sup> Cook (1962) 113-114; Graham (1983) 219. Buchner (1979) 136-137, has since demonstrated that Strabo’s comment, previously interpreted as referring to the agricultural fertility of the island and its gold mines, has been misunderstood and is anyway incompatible with the actual geology and poor fertility of the island.

<sup>198</sup> Tandy (1997) 69.

Greeks were established by political malcontents, refugees, opportunists or those fleeing natural disaster, but no firm evidence exists to suggest that they were founded due to the problem of surplus population.

*b) Rise of a nouveau riche*

A demand for political participation from a newly wealthy or politically aware class of Greeks has been suggested as a cause of strife and the poetry of Theognis and Solon is often cited as proof of this. Lewis writes that ‘Solon repeatedly separates excellence from the possession of wealth, undoubtedly a slap at any *nouveau riche* who was claiming the status associated with aristocratic birth based on wealth.’<sup>199</sup> Donlan went as far as to claim that Theognis’ poetry suggests ‘that the Theognidean aristocracy has relinquished political and economic power to a group below them’.<sup>200</sup> In this view he did not depart from that of de Ste. Croix, who viewed Theognis as ‘a class-conscious aristocrat if ever there was one.’<sup>201</sup> Stanley writes that ‘Theognis, in his poems, uses the term *agathoi* to refer only to the old aristocracy, whereas, *kakoi* refers to anyone who was not a member of the aristocracy, no matter what their economic standing was.’<sup>202</sup> Regarding Attica Andrewes saw Solon as firmly on the side of ‘the poor’ and that Solon ‘certainly thought that the nobles, the existing governing class, were guilty of the rapacity he condemns.’<sup>203</sup> On examining this theory more closely several problems immediately become apparent. Firstly, the theory generally assumes the existence of a fixed but poorly defined aristocratic

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<sup>199</sup> Lewis (2006) 98.

<sup>200</sup> Donlan (1985) 223-244.

<sup>201</sup> de Ste. Croix (1981) 278-279.

<sup>202</sup> Stanley (1999) 86.

<sup>203</sup> Andrewes (1956) 84-85.

class.<sup>204</sup> Secondly, it is contradicted by the manner in which the Homeric poems and the Archaic poets describe social mobility and the possession of wealth. Thirdly, this theory misinterprets the identity of the *kakoi* in Archaic poetry by ignoring the contexts in which this term appears.

Perhaps the most significant problem with the idea of an Archaic *nouveau riche* is that it operates on the assumption that there existed an established and clearly defined aristocracy. Many scholars writing on Archaic Greece state the existence of fixed ‘classes’, inevitably including an aristocratic class, in the Archaic *polis*.<sup>205</sup> This assumption is difficult to reconcile with the evidence of the Homeric poems and the Archaic sources. Theognis, as noted by Duplouy, depicts an extremely fluid kind of society where upward and downward social mobility could be very extreme.<sup>206</sup> This situation Theognis describes is similar to that depicted in the Homeric poems, where the power and status of individuals could rise and fall. As discussed in the first chapter, Peleus, Laertes, Astyanax and Telemachus are clear examples of actual or potential downward social mobility, while the ‘Cretan’ Odysseus offers an example of dramatic upward social mobility. Not only was social mobility a feature of life for the Greeks of the eighth century, but the later poets never express fears for the downfall of their class, but for their community as a

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<sup>204</sup> Despite the fact that an ‘aristocrat’ is defined as an individual set apart by birth or holding hereditary titles the historical view of Archaic Greek ‘aristocracy’ is neither clear nor consistent. Hignett (1952) 86, defined this group as ‘the horse-owning aristocracies, based on their ownership of land’. Murray (1993) 141, proposes that there existed an ‘aristocracy of birth’ without suggesting any factors or parties that could have enforced the rules that governed ‘birth’ as the indicator of status. Starr (1977) 122-123, defined the Archaic aristocracy by birth, citing the use of *eugeneia* and *genaios* by Archaic poets, landed wealth and a ‘distinct way of life’. Manville (1990) 72-73, offered a very broad definition: ‘One can only guess about the origins of the early aristocracy, but its existence as an acknowledged elite within the social context is not to be doubted. These were men who wielded economic power and passed it down through their families; exercised its prerogatives publicly, and assumed positions of formal and informal leadership; and emphasized their higher stations symbolically as, for example, the scale, trappings, and structures of their burials would suggest.’ For a fixed aristocracy in the poetry of Theognis see in particular Papakonstantinou (2004) 7.

<sup>205</sup> e.g. Greenhalgh (1972) 190-27; West (1974) 68-9, 71; Donlan (1985) 241; Balot (2006) 34; Bintliff (2006) 328-330, Noussia-Fantuzzi (2010) 22.

<sup>206</sup> Duplouy (2006) 43-44.

whole. Solon expresses a fear for the city (ἄστυ) and the *polis* (πάσῃ πόλει).<sup>207</sup> The poetry of Theognis claims that it is the *demos* that will suffer due to evil actions (Theog. 43-45, 47-49, [West]), the *polis* that will be destroyed (42 [West]), and the *astoi* (23 [West]) or the *laoi* (52-57 [West]) that are its inhabitants. Alcaeus also describes the *polis* being ‘devoured’ by a bad leader (Alc. 70, 129 [West]) and the *damos* being in a state of distress as a result (129 [West]). Nor were the actions of a specific social or political class the greatest threat to the *polis*. Solon wrote not only of restraining the leaders of the *demos*, the *hegemones*, but also criticised the greed and foolishness of the *astoi* who were also threatening the safety of the *polis* (Solon. 4.5-8 [West]). It is worth noting that both Theognis and Solon were engaging in a moralising discourse in which the poets or their personas attempted to convince their audiences that their view of politics and society was correct. The kind of behaviour they condemned could, after all, be effectively derided by presenting it as a threat to the whole community. This does not detract, however, from the usefulness of these passages as the concerns they express must have been understandable, and the threats credible, for these exhortations to have had any meaning to a contemporary audience. The ‘communal’ language of these poets suggests that the Archaic *polis* was not destabilised by a single well-defined social class. It also suggests that Archaic poetry does not represent the complaints of the aristocracy against a changing social order, but the concerns of free men over violence, disorder and excess.

The theory of an Archaic *nouveau riche* challenging the rule of the traditional aristocracy often turns to Theognis for support, particularly extracts such as φορτηγοὶ δ’ ἄρχουσι, κακοὶ δ’ ἀγαθῶν καθύπερθε (Theog. 678 [West]). It is

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<sup>207</sup> Solon. 4.17-21 [West].

tempting to assume that the *phortegoi* are men who have enriched themselves through trade who, despite their wealth, were held in contempt by the conventional elites. A serious problem with this interpretation is that if there was any prejudice against those ‘in trade’ this has probably been over-emphasised by historians, as there is no firm evidence for any such prejudice in Homer or the Archaic sources. In Homer several individuals engage in trade without any mention of any apparent stigma. The Achaian army trades for wine with men from Lemnos who give to Agamemnon and Menelaus a special payment of their goods (*Il.* 7.471-475), Athena in disguise claims to be trading a cargo of iron for bronze (*Od.* 1.184), and the *basileis* appear to be perfectly willing to participate personally in the slave-trade (*Il.* 7.471-475; *Od.* 15.483-4, 20.383). The often quoted passage of the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus is insulted at the Phaiakian games by Euryalos (*Od.* 8.159-164) has been taken as evidence of stigma against those who traded for a living. Before reading too much into this passage it must be noted that Odysseus was subjected to several insulting remarks and Euryalos never uses a noun to refer to Odysseus personally that could be translated simply as ‘trader’. Euryalos describes Odysseus as appearing unlike an athlete (*Od.* 8.159-160) and then tells him flatly that he does not seem to be an athlete (*Od.* 8.164). Between these remarks is the jibe that Odysseus is greedy for profit (φόρτου τε μνήμων καὶ ἐπίσκοπος ἧσιν ὁδαίων κερδέων θ’ ἀρπαλέων)<sup>208</sup> and merely a master of πρηκτῆρες (doers, dealers or traders). The response of Odysseus to this verbal attack is to declare himself to be a fine athlete, although wearied by his ordeals (*Od.* 8.166-184). Even if Euryalos has implied that Odysseus is a trader, and that this is in some sense bad or shameful, why does the poet not have Odysseus address this at all in his response?

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<sup>208</sup> *Od.* 8.163-164.

A more logical interpretation of Euryalos' remarks would be that Euryalos has simply claimed that Odysseus is a nobody and unfit for athletic competition. Furthermore, in Solon's list of the methods through which men gain riches he lists travel over the sea (Solon. 13.43-46 [West]), possibly a reference to trade for profit, alongside farming, craft, prophesising and medicine, without any apparent prejudice. The poetry of Solon and Theognis both recognised that the pursuit of wealth by men was inevitable, and criticised excess and the accumulation of wealth by deception, injustice and violence, but never single out trade as particularly loathsome.<sup>209</sup> If 'new men' were becoming rich and powerful in the time of Theognis and Solon it was not through particularly novel methods. Trade is not derided by Homer or the Archaic poets, but Homer, Hesiod and the Archaic poets do criticise those who violently and unjustly appropriated the property of others. If the elite of the Archaic *polis* lost their power it was to more successful rivals whose identity need not be defined in terms of aristocrats or classes based on occupation.<sup>210</sup>

### c) *The Kakoi*

It is now necessary to look into the identity of the *kakoi* of Archaic Greece who are variously described by historians as the lower classes, the poor, or anyone not born into the aristocracy regardless of their personal wealth. To discover the identity of

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<sup>209</sup> For similarities between the poetry of Theognis and Solon see Noussia-Fantuzzi (2010) 55-65. There is an ongoing debate about the date and authenticity of the poems of Theognis. A summary of the earlier stages of the debate can be found in Woodbury (1951) 1-10. When referring to Theognis. 39-52 West (1974) 68, concludes that these lines were written no later than 630. Fränkel (1975) 401, believes the poems to have been written at the beginning of the sixth century and the start of the fifth. Despite the differing views of scholars the Archaic origins of the poems are generally accepted and the norms, customs and concerns expressed within are consistent with those expressed by Homer, Hesiod and other Archaic poets.

<sup>210</sup> van Wees (1999) 14, 35, has strongly opposed the view that Theognis depicted the rise of a *nouveau riche* element in Megara. Van Wees' study convincingly argued for an environment in which conflict already existed among established elements in the *polis*, although van Wees saw this element as a fixed elite.



these individuals it is better to take Theognis and Solon at their word rather than impose a social system on Megara or Athens then search for evidence of this system in the poems. Approaching the *kakoi* with the assumption that they must conform to a rigid class system leads to confusion regarding their identity.<sup>211</sup> In lines 832-835 of Theognis (οὐδέ τις ἡμῖν αἴτιος ἀθανάτων, Κύρνε, θεῶν μακάρων, ἀλλ' ἀνδρῶν τε βίη καὶ κέρδεα δειλὰ καὶ ὕβρις πολλῶν ἐξ ἀγαθῶν ἐς κακότητ' ἔβαλεν) the poet claims that the gods are not to blame, but that *bia* (force), *kerdos* (greed or gain) and *hybris* have thrown men from *agatha* into wickedness. Here Theognis makes no mention of an occupation, but identifies typically wicked behaviour characterised as *hybris* and manifested as violence that has brought the change from good to bad. On several occasions the poet explains what he believes a *kakos* to be and how one behaves. The *kakon andra* does not practice *dike* (Theog. 279 [West]), whereas all *arete* is in *dikaiousune* and every *agathos* is *dikaios* (Theog. 146-147 [West]). The *kakon andra* is defined by his behaviour, not economic status, and the *agathos* is such because of his ability to practice justice. These lines strongly suggest that the *agathoi* and *kakoi* have nothing to do with fixed social classes, and that Solon's refusal to exchange *arete* for wealth in fragment 15 (ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς τούτοις οὐ διαμειψόμεθα τῆς ἀρετῆς τὸν πλοῦτον) is not a refusal to take 'new money' but a firm stance against taking wealth unjustly, whether through violence, deception or corruption. If *arete* was found in *dike* and the theft of property was *adikos*, it makes

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<sup>211</sup> E.g. regarding the couplet: 'Lawless behaviour, Cynus, is what God first gives to villains (κακῶι...ἀνδρῖ) that he means to sweep away.' (Theog. 151-152 [West]) Fisher (1992) 209, writes: 'it is difficult to say which type of 'evil man' is in view here, an oppressive noble, a nouveau riche, or a noble who adopts populist policies; but this 'optimistic' couplet asserts, as did Hesiod, that a career of *hybris* leads to ultimate annihilation.'

perfect sense for Solon to state that *arete* is therefore retained by one who refused to steal property.<sup>212</sup>

These *kakoi* who lacked justice could not possibly be ‘the poor’ as Theognis is aware that men are capable of acquiring wealth through the very acts that define them as *kakoi*, by being *adikos* and passing unjust judgements purely for the sake of private profit (*kerdos*) and the increase of their own power (Theog. 43-45 [West]).<sup>213</sup> Solon even claims that many *agathoi* are poor and many *kakoi* are rich (Solon. 15 [West]), reflecting the fact that some of his contemporaries were getting rich through corruption and violence, a phenomenon also attested by Hesiod and Theognis. Theognis even laments that evil-doing men now lead his town with perverse laws (Theog. 288-291 [West]), implying that being a *kakos* and occupying a position of power were not mutually exclusive, and again voicing the idea that a *kakos* was an unjust man. It is not necessary to claim, as one scholar does, that the ‘perverse laws’ mentioned by Theognis were the creation of the newly powerful lower classes, or that they were detrimental specifically to the position of the nobility.<sup>214</sup> There is no evidence for this whatsoever. Those that led with ‘perverse laws’ are criticised by the poet because their *nomoi* were bad (*kaka*), allowing *hybris* to conquer *dike*. The ‘perverse laws’ mentioned by Theognis were the unjust decrees of men who held power but failed to practice *dike*, not the political attacks of the lower classes against the nobility. These men were *kakoi* because their *nomoi* transgressed the established norms of the community as far as the poet was concerned.

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<sup>212</sup> West (1974) 153, interprets lines 347-348 of Theognis as a metaphor for the poet having lost his own property in ‘a brief unpleasant experience’ but given the content of the rest of the corpus violence, or the threat of violence, is probably implied.

<sup>213</sup> ἀλλ’ ὅταν ὑβρίζειν τοῖσι κακοῖσιν ἄδη δῆμόν τε φθείρουσι δίκας τ’ ἀδίκοισι διδοῦσιν οἰκείων κερδέων εἵνεκα καὶ κράτους.

<sup>214</sup> Fisher (1992) 210: ‘The *kakoi* are presumably here, as in other poems, members of the lower social classes who have gained power, and passed radical laws that affect the proper power and perhaps life-styles of the old nobles.’ Theognis is generally considered to be ‘aristocratic’ or ‘noble’ by modern commentators, e.g. Selle (2008) 255.

It was not class snobbery that compelled the poet to urge Kyrnos to shun *kakoi*, but the fear that Kyrnos would be corrupted through association. Theognis makes this quite clear, declaring that *kakoi* are not born into the status of *kakoi*, but become so by associating with wicked men and *learning* to be *kakoi*.<sup>215</sup> Theognis does not advise Kyrnos to avoid *kakoi* because they are poor; the poet even asks that one avoid censuring another man because of his poverty (Theog. 155 [West]). Instead, he urges Kyrnos to avoid *kakoi* simply because they are wicked and dangerous, emphasising their untrustworthiness (Theog. 1168 [West]). Given the clear condemnation of the practices of *kakoi* by the Archaic sources, and the obvious resentment of the fact that these practices enriched some *kakoi*, it is simply unnecessary to create a fixed class of ‘new rich’ made wealthy through craft or trade, for which the evidence is scanty, and impose them on the *kakoi* of Archaic Greece. Some men were considered *kakoi* by their contemporaries because their behaviour outraged established norms and customs. Given the context in which the *kakoi* appear in Archaic poetry they should be defined by their behaviour rather than social status.

#### d) *Hoplite ‘reform’*

There was no popular movement of middle-class Greek soldiers against their aristocratic rulers in Archaic Greece and the evidence for a clash between hoplites and an established elite of nobles, apart from an anachronistic extract of Aristotle, is non-existent. The theory of the hoplite revolution has been accepted by many despite

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<sup>215</sup> Τοὶ κακοὶ οὐ πάντες κακοὶ ἐκ γαστρὸς γεγονάσιν, ἀλλ’ ἄνδρεςσι κακοῖς συνθέμενοι φιλήν ἔργα τε δεῖλ’ ἔμαθον καὶ ἔπη δύσφημα καὶ ὕβριν ἐλπόμενοι κείνους πάντα λέγειν ἔτυμα. (Theog. 304-307 [West]). Fisher (1992) 210, attempts to have it both ways by interpreting these lines as reflecting corruption by association *and* a class system: ‘Whether these lines describe the corruption of younger villains by older, or the alliance between innate (i.e. lower class) ‘bad men’ and renegades from the upper class, is not wholly clear (the second is perhaps preferable).’

the fact that no Archaic source ever attributes the problems of the period to resentful hoplites<sup>216</sup> and, as this chapter has already shown, no Archaic source ever depicts conflict between a middle-class of hoplites and an aristocratic class of nobles. As noted by Krentz, no Archaic source connects hoplites with a fixed economic class such as the *zeugitai*.<sup>217</sup> Despite this the hoplite revolution or ‘hoplite reform’ is often discussed by scholars investigating the economic and social issues of Archaic Greece. A detailed account of the hoplite debate can be found in Kagan and Viggiano<sup>218</sup> and this section will summarise some of the most recent scholarship and examine a selection of the most relevant evidence.

A distinction between Homeric ‘heroic’ style combat and Archaic hoplite warfare has remained a consistent feature of scholarship on both periods. This has resulted in a search for the social and political consequences of the supposed hoplite revolution that has profoundly influenced the political history of Archaic Greece. These two aspects of the theory were clearly defined by Nilsson in *Die Hoplitentaktik und das Staatswesen* and summarised in a further article in English.<sup>219</sup> The ideas defined by Nilsson were subsequently adopted entirely or in part by many scholars who generally accepted the essential points as ‘The middle classes contributed the hoplite phalanx, and this gave added force to their resentment against the aristocratic monopoly of political power and exclusive right to interpret justice.’<sup>220</sup> Scholars, particularly Andrewes,<sup>221</sup> have argued that prior to this development the fighting had been carried out exclusively by aristocrats whose power base was effectively undermined by the hoplites’ contribution on the

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<sup>216</sup> This obvious fact has been noted by several scholars but rarely investigated. See Drews (1972) 131; Cawkwell (1995) 75; Anderson (2005) 195.

<sup>217</sup> Krentz (2007) 71.

<sup>218</sup> Kagan and Viggiano (2013) 1-56.

<sup>219</sup> Nilsson (1929a) 270ff., (1929b) 1-11.

<sup>220</sup> White (1955) 5.

<sup>221</sup> Andrewes (1956) 8, 34-36.

battlefield.<sup>222</sup> This view was based on a flawed reading of epic poetry that interpreted the prominence of ‘heroic’ warriors such as Achilles and Hektor as exclusive aristocratic domination of warfare. As shown in the first chapter, a picture of Homeric warfare dominated almost exclusively by heroes and aristocrats is an illusion. Despite the unquestioned poetic focus on the *basileis* the masses of warriors are still perfectly visible in Homeric depictions of warfare.<sup>223</sup> Yet many modern interpretations of pre-hoplite warfare are dominated by preconceptions of Archaic classes.<sup>224</sup> Hanson, for example, states that warfare prior to 800 consisted of ‘the private duels of wealthy knights.’<sup>225</sup> As shown in Chapter I, recent studies have shown that this is not the case and the Homeric poems in fact depict massed combat.

The prominence of hoplites as a social and political phenomenon in studies of the Archaic period can be attributed to several factors. First, the appearance of hoplite equipment in the archaeological record of the eighth century. Second, a number of seventh-century artefacts that appear to show depictions of hoplite style combat. Third, a number of instances in Archaic poetry appear to mention hoplite style combat or equipment. These factors have all superficially supported the theory that hoplite combat appeared either in the late eighth or seventh centuries. The ‘hoplite revolution’ also fits well with Aristotle’s fourth-century interpretation of events. Aristotle claimed that as the hoplites grew stronger they took more political power and more persons began to have a share in the government (Arist. *Pol.* 4.1297b.14-29). Aristotle’s interpretation of those with heavy armour as a distinct social group was not only anachronistic, as will be shown, but perhaps inaccurate

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<sup>222</sup> See also Berve (1967) 10-11, Pleket (1969) 35-37, Cartledge (1977) 23.

<sup>223</sup> Pritchett (1985) 33, Latacz (1977) 45, van Wees (1986) 235-303, (1988) 1-24, (1994a) 1-18, (1994b) 131-155.

<sup>224</sup> Snodgrass (1965) 110-111.

<sup>225</sup> Hanson (1989) 27.

even for his own time.<sup>226</sup> The theory of an Archaic hoplite revolution, despite its basis in a flawed interpretation of the evidence, has dramatically influenced the social and political history of the Archaic period.

Iconography of the seventh century depicts warriors armed with bows in among the spear-armed warriors, throwing spears, warriors carrying pairs of spears, as well as types of armour and shields found in Homer. In a discussion of the surviving iconography van Wees noted the lack of uniformity among many of the warriors depicted on Protocorinthian and Protoattic pottery, suggesting a lack of economic equivalence among the warriors.<sup>227</sup> This questions the conclusions of scholars who interpret hoplites as being ‘middle class’ or ‘of like circumstance’.<sup>228</sup> Further examples of seventh-century ceramics are presented by van Wees that clearly depict warriors carrying two spears, for throwing and thrusting, as well as scenes of flight and pursuit that recall the style of Homeric combat.<sup>229</sup> Hoplite combat was too close to allow for an exchange of missiles by the hoplites themselves or for a fluid style of combat. Yet the seventh-century poetry of Archilochus characterises battle as the sound of the impact of javelins (ἀκόντων δοῦπον) (Archil. 139.6 [West]). Callinus asks that a dying warrior throw his javelin for the final time (1.5 [West]) and describes a fleeing warrior escaping from battle and the sound of javelins (δοῦπον ἀκόντων) (1.14-15 [West]). Another seventh-century poet, Mimnermus, praises a man for fighting among the *promachoi*. The lines bear a close

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<sup>226</sup> This vindicates the comments of Rhodes (2006) 248, regarding the vulnerability of Archaic Greece to misinterpretation by later sources.

<sup>227</sup> van Wees (2000b) 132.

<sup>228</sup> Hanson (1991) 6. The problems with this view have been noted by van Wees (2004) 47: ‘But the gap between the *very* rich and the *very* poor was wide, and merely falling between the extremes did not make the majority of hoplites a group of social and economic peers, or a ‘middle class’ in any meaningful sense.’

<sup>229</sup> van Wees (2000b) 136-142. Van Wees presents, in particular, the Chigi Vase, MacMillan Aryballos and the Berlin Aryballos as examples. All these artefacts are dated to the seventh century and, as van Wees notes: ‘are superficially suggestive of the hoplite phalanx, but in detail turn out to have closer analogies in Homeric battle scenes.’

resemblance to a typical Homeric exhortation to fight with the *promachoi* (14 [West]).<sup>230</sup> Alcaeus describes bronze helmets with plumes, bronze greaves and swords as well as corslets kept in the household. All these items were also stored or displayed in the Homeric household and appear in Homeric battle scenes (*Od.* 19.4-13). The poetry of Tyrtaeus has been cited as evidence of hoplite combat but Tyrtaeus does not present any instances of combat that are distinct from other Archaic sources or Homer. The mere fact that the poet literally asks that soldiers hold their ground and keep together (11.21-32 [West]) cannot be taken as evidence for an entirely new style of hoplite warfare. Not only would a theory based on such scanty and vague evidence be precarious at best, but these ambiguous exhortations and pieces of advice are found in Homer. In the *Iliad* warriors stand so closely that their arms and armour touches that of their neighbours (*Il.* 13.131.-133). This is not a formal formation but bands of men crowding together for protection or through enthusiasm, as occurs when Achilles exhorts the Myrmidons to fight with the Trojans (*Il.* 16.210-217). As discussed in the first chapter, Homeric warriors had no fixed position in a battle line or formation. They moved among their comrades at will, striking at the enemy or falling back as it suited them. Classical hoplites held fixed positions within a formation that they could not leave without disrupting the group of warriors.

Tyrtaeus also describes light-armed warriors operating seemingly at will among the more heavily armed, using their shields for cover and harassing the enemy with missiles (11.35-38 [West]). There would have been no room for such activity in a hoplite phalanx. However, light-armed soldiers or those armed with missile weapons do operate in a similar fashion in the *Iliad*. They use the shields of more heavily

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<sup>230</sup> The poet, for example, encourages the heroes to fight *meta protoisin* (*Il.* 4.341, 12.315, 321, 13.270) and Idomeneus states that a brave man will push forward among the *promachoi* (*Il.* 13.291).

armed warriors for cover and take opportunistic shots at the enemy (*Il.* 4.112-115, 8.266-272). The evidence from Archaic poetry regarding warfare is sparse and fails to provide any clear evidence that hoplite tactics had been adopted in the seventh and sixth centuries. What is apparent is that Archaic poetry and iconography appears to depict warfare that resembles the style of combat found in Homer.

*e) Land tenure in Attica*

Despite the appeals of some historians against using Solon as evidence for economic conditions,<sup>231</sup> several scholars have claimed that systems of land tenure, of varying complexity, must have existed in Attica in the sixth century, often basing this on Solon's poetry.<sup>232</sup> Andrewes, in his work on Greek tyranny, believed that the Attic system of loans, and the harsh law that supposedly governed it, ensured that Attic peasants who defaulted on their debts to the elite could be enslaved. They paid their debt with a sixth part of their produce and the *horoi* marked the land from which was due their payments to their creditors.<sup>233</sup> These claims are generally based on fragment 36 of Solon which was anachronistically represented as a cancellation of debts by *The Constitution of the Athenians* ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 12.4) and Plutarch (*Solon.* 15).<sup>234</sup> There are several problems with this view, not least the obvious question asked by Bintliff, that if Solon actually released land 'to the advantage of

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<sup>231</sup> E.g. Lewis (2006) 3: 'Nor is Solon evidence for Archaic economic conditions – his concern is rather for the effects of material wealth on a man's disposition, his *polis* and his fate.'

<sup>232</sup> E.g. Hignett (1952) 87-88; Jeffery (1976) 90-92; Starr (1977) 182-184; Murray (1980) 190-193; Manville (1990) 110-112. Another theory presented by Donlan (1997b) 44, is that by about 700 the best farmland was being monopolized by the elite who had become landowners on a vast scale. The theory that land was being monopolised not only ignores modest but free farmers like Laertes or Hesiod but assumes the existence of a fixed aristocracy of such stability and longevity that it could, over a very few generations, acquire almost all of the best land.

<sup>233</sup> Andrewes (1956) 84-87.

<sup>234</sup> Although recent commentary on Solon has recognised the problems with using fragment 36 as evidence for economic conditions, the misunderstanding of the passage as describing a social and economic conflict between rich and poor is still entertained. E.g. Noussia-Fantuzzi (2010) 455.



the oppressed, but without its redistribution – how could this work?’.<sup>235</sup> These theories have been decisively disproved by Harris who points out that no evidence exists for *horoi* as mortgage markers until the fourth century, and that Solon could not have bragged about pulling up the *horoi* as this was not only a serious crime but also sacrilegious. Instead, these lines are simply one of Solon’s several striking metaphors, representing the liberation of Attica from *stasis* and disorder.<sup>236</sup> The *hektemeroi* that were relieved through Solon’s *seisachtheia* were likely to be the same individuals who paid gifts to the *basileis* in Homer and Hesiod as discussed in the first chapter.<sup>237</sup> Hesiod mentions the same practice occurring, stating that the *basileis* received gifts for judging cases (Hes. *Op.* 37-39). Theognis mentions men who grow rich and powerful through passing corrupt judgements (Theog. 43-45 [West]) while he insists on judging cases fairly (Theog. 543-6 [West]). It appears that, just as in Homer and Hesiod, some informal system existed where the adherents of the local leader, or perhaps those who simply lived under his power, would give gifts in return for protection and arbitration despite the fact that the system was vulnerable to abuse.<sup>238</sup> Who were those who had been enslaved and sold if not debtors? Those who were enslaved and sold abroad were not *hektemeroi* that had become indebted, but free persons from Attica who had been seized by powerful men and sold for profit, as occurs on numerous occasions in Homer.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Bintliff (2006) 321.

<sup>236</sup> Harris (1997) 105-107. On similes and metaphors in Solon’s poetry see Noussia-Fantuzzi (2010) 67-77.

<sup>237</sup> *Il.* 9.149-56=291-7, 12.310-21, 17.225-6. *Od.* 13.13-15, 19.194-8.

<sup>238</sup> van Wees (1999) 6, has reached a damning conclusion regarding this phenomenon in Homer, citing *Od.* 4.689-92 and arguing that ‘impartial justice turns out to be the *exception* rather than the rule’. This view is perhaps too pessimistic. Although the Homeric poems arguably idealise the *basileus*, there was obviously huge social pressure for the *basileis* to uphold customary norms and display fairness before the community. This is displayed, for example, by the list of benefits for the *basileus* who upholds *themistes* and Achilles’ conspicuous arbitration at the funeral games.

<sup>239</sup> Harris (2006) 266-267.

The problems faced in the Archaic period by men like Solon did not stem from overpopulation, land shortage or conflict between fixed classes. As Nagy has already observed, Theognis was not a champion of the aristocracy and neither was Solon a champion of democracy.<sup>240</sup> Nor was Theognis unhappy because he was the ‘aristocratic witness of a demotic revolution.’<sup>241</sup> The problems Solon, Theognis and their contemporaries actually experienced were excess and greed that encouraged *hybris*, violence, corruption, and extreme social mobility. These phenomena brought about death, destruction, slavery (literally and metaphorically), *stasis* and the possibility of tyranny because of the absence of strong legal mechanisms that could punish wrongdoers and enforce order. The second part of this chapter will now discuss the actual crises of the Archaic period.

## II

### *a) Land and Labour*

The Homeric poems exhibit a striking absence of war over the possession of land. This has been noted by several scholars but rarely explained or investigated.<sup>242</sup> Conflict in the Homeric poems is generally carried out in retaliation or for booty. When individuals such as Telemachus (*Od.* 1.376-379, 397-398, 2.367-369, 15.10-13) or Astyanax (*Il.* 22.488-489)<sup>243</sup> are said to be under threat of losing their property the threat comes from predatory private individuals seeking to exploit their weakness, not from ‘land-hungry’ external communities. Two migrant communities have no difficulty resettling themselves in Phaiakia (*Od.* 6.6-10) and Rhodes (*Il.*

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<sup>240</sup> Nagy (1983) 85.

<sup>241</sup> West (1974) 71.

<sup>242</sup> E.g. Jackson (1993) 70-71.

<sup>243</sup> Richardson (1993) 160, speculates on the specific threats within and beyond Astyanax’s immediate family.

2.661-668). Noëmon can graze animals on the Greek mainland without any apparent difficulty (*Od.* 4.634-637). Land is awarded freely as a gift, recompense or a reward to outstanding leaders and warriors.<sup>244</sup> To describe Laertes' farm the poet uses the participle τετυγμένον, meaning to have been produced or built. The poet explains that Laertes had to work hard to build up his farm (ἐπεὶ μάλα πόλλ' ἐμόγησεν) (*Od.* 24.206-207). This strongly suggests Laertes merely went out into the hinterland and cultivated a portion of unused land, rather than being awarded an existing farm. Hesiod mentions many problems faced by a man of his social position, a modest free farmer, but lack of farmland is not one of them. There is no shortage of land depicted in Homer or Hesiod. In fact there seems to be land available for cultivation. There is, however, a high demand for labour.<sup>245</sup> One of Hesiod's prime concerns was labour, how much of it one needed and how it should be used. He advised on what slaves to buy (*Hes. Op.* 405-407), what kind of work they should undertake and when (*Hes. Op.* 458-461, 469-471, 502-503, 573, 597-598), and when to supplement the slaves with hired labourers (*Hes. Op.* 602). Even a modest farmer like Hesiod relied almost totally on slaves, as does Laertes who only works himself because of poverty, otherwise relying entirely on his slaves (*Od.* 24.386-390, 497-498).

It has been noted in Chapter I that agricultural surplus enabled the *basileis* to engage in the social practices of their communities and maintain their positions as the leaders of those communities. As noted by Harris, 'the elite exploited slave labour to maintain their dominance in society.'<sup>246</sup> Consequently a surplus of wealth,

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<sup>244</sup> Land given through marriage (*Il.* 6.191-195), and as a reward for fighting (*Il.* 9.576-580, 12.313-314, 20.184-186).

<sup>245</sup> Bintliff (2006) 327-8, has noted that the shortage was one of labour, not land, but does not investigate in detail the relationship between the practices of the elite and slave labour.

<sup>246</sup> Harris (2012) 364. See also Thalmann (1998) 50: 'It is their work and its products that support the way of life and the activities of the families at the head of the various *oikoi*: the feasts and sacrifices, the hospitality, and the (primarily horizontal) redistribution of goods in the form of gifts that is the

including agricultural produce, treasure and arms and armour, was absolutely essential to maintaining the position of a *basileus*. Without a surplus he could not engage in practices such as *xenia*, make marriage alliances, or maintain his relationships with his *hetairoi*. Furthermore, without a surplus a *basileus* could not perform the acts that benefited the community and maintained popular support, such as sacrificing animals and distributing gifts. Not only the elite but more modest landowners like Hesiod aimed at producing a profit, not merely achieving self-sufficiency.<sup>247</sup> In the Homeric poems this need for surplus translates into the accumulation of lands and other private property. The necessity of producing an agricultural surplus also translates into a very high demand for labour to work the property of wealthy individuals, essentially a demand for slaves.<sup>248</sup> Slaves in Homer appear to be readily available either through purchase or raiding. Hesiod takes the availability of slaves for granted, merely advising on what sort of slave to buy.<sup>249</sup> Homeric slaves were property owned by their masters who enjoyed exclusive rights to their use.<sup>250</sup> Slaves could be put to work all year round and their master could feed and clothe them as he saw fit, meaning that slavery was a cheap, reliable source of labour.<sup>251</sup> These factors made slavery a more dependable and attractive source of labour than transient free workers.

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basic mechanism in the functioning of elite society.' For the dominance of the workforce by slaves see Patterson (2008) 62-63.

<sup>247</sup> van Wees (1992) 49-53. See also van Wees (2009) 448-450.

<sup>248</sup> Finley (1980) 86, believed that three factors created the demand for slaves in Archaic Greece: the private ownership of land, availability of markets and commodity production and the unavailability of an internal source of labour. Finley did not draw the connection between the maintenance of the elites' position and slave labour. Note also the comments of Scheidel (2013) 13, on supply and demand and the ancient slave trade: 'Under these circumstances, it would make sense to own slaves instead of hiring laborers in only two cases: if slaves were significantly more productive than free labor, and if hired labour was hard to come by and/or/unreliable.' For slavery in Sparta and some of the problems therein see Luraghi (2009) 261-285.

<sup>249</sup> Rihll (1996) 97.

<sup>250</sup> Harris (2012) 352-358.

<sup>251</sup> Eumaeus and his fellow slaves have only one set of clothes each (*Od.* 14.513-514).

The estate of Odysseus provides an indication of how heavily the *basileis* relied on slaves to maintain their position. Odysseus is said to own fifty female slaves in his household (*Od.* 22.421-423).<sup>252</sup> Outside of the town five slaves including Eumaeus care for a herd of pigs (*Od.* 14.24-28). In a hypothetical exercise Harris notes that Odysseus' forty-eight herds would therefore give a number of around two hundred and fifty slaves, allowing four or five slaves for each herd. This number is then substantially reduced to twenty five, a mere ten percent of the original, by Harris to allow for poetic exaggeration.<sup>253</sup> Harris' final number does not take into account those slaves who may have been engaged in other agricultural tasks mentioned in Homer or Hesiod but are largely 'invisible' in the *Odyssey*. These include building shelters, walls or barns, clearing fields, sowing crops, ploughing, and tending orchards and vegetable gardens. The final number of slaves owned by Odysseus, then, may be even higher. A relatively wealthy man like Odysseus clearly relied almost totally on slave labour for his wealth.

The need for wealth and surplus resulted in raids for slaves. Such was the need for slaves that raiding parties would prolong their attack to seize individuals rather than merely departing quickly and safely with their loot (*Od.* 14.245-265). The depiction of the enslavement of the entire or a large portion of defeated communities must indicate that slaves were highly profitable either as labourers to be put to work or sold for profit (*Il.* 3.301, 4.238-239, 17.224, 24.731-734, *Od.* 9.41).<sup>254</sup> The

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<sup>252</sup> As noted by Garlan (1988) 33, the apparently greater number of female slaves in Homer is an 'optical illusion', particularly in the *Odyssey* where much of plot takes place in domestic settings. See also Harris (2012) 360.

<sup>253</sup> Harris (2012) 360-361. These are not precise figures, they are presented to illustrate the comparatively large numbers of slaves owned by the wealthy and the reliance of the wealthy on these slaves.

<sup>254</sup> Kirk (1985) 356, is probably wrong to see *Il.* 4.238-239 as implying mere captivity. The obvious profitability of slavery, the many references to enslavement elsewhere in the poems, and the fact that once Troy was destroyed no one would be left to pay ransom, indicate that the women and children would almost certainly be enslaved. Merely holding them captive would have been pointless.

abduction or seizure of higher-ranking individuals suggests their value as property to be sold or as labourers could surpass their value in ransom payments. Eumaeus and the Phoenician woman who kidnapped him are depicted as the offspring of wealthy individuals yet they are bought and sold as slaves rather than ransomed (*Od.* 15.417-484). Chryseis' father offers Agamemnon ransom for his daughter but Agamemnon would rather have Chryseis put to work as a slave (*Il.* 1.29-31). Achilles chose to sell a number of Priam's sons into slavery rather than ransom them despite Priam's ability to pay (*Il.* 21.77-79, 24.750-753). Raiding and violent seizure of individuals was a particularly effective method of accumulating slaves as captives appear to have been considered slaves, and therefore property, upon the point of capture. The suddenness with which captives made the transition from free to slave is demonstrated by the phrases 'day of freedom' and 'day of slavery'.<sup>255</sup> Hektor expresses his fear that Andromache may be led away by some Achaian, taking away her 'day of freedom' (ἐλεύθερον ἥμαρ) (*Il.* 6.455),<sup>256</sup> and explains how he defends her from the 'day of slavery' (δούλιον ἥμαρ) (*Il.* 6.463). While mocking Patroklos Hektor claims that Patroklos had desired to sack Troy and take the 'day of freedom' (ἐλεύθερον ἥμαρ) from the Trojan women (*Il.* 16.831). Odysseus also lies about a treacherous crew who conspire to seize and enslave him, 'devising the day of slavery for me' (*Od.* 14.340). These examples demonstrate the attractiveness of violent seizure as a method of acquiring slaves.

The frequency of enslavement and the obviously thriving trade in slaves depicted in the Homeric poems further supports the theory that a very high demand for slave labour existed in eighth-century Greece. Despite the large numbers of slaves encountered in the Homeric poems and the obviously widespread practice of

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<sup>255</sup> Lewis (forthcoming).

<sup>256</sup> For comments on this phrase see Kirk (1990) 221.

slavery, enslaved workers did not always meet the demand for agricultural labour. The Homeric poems (*Il.* 21.441-454, *Od.* 11.489-491) and Hesiod (*Hes. Op.* 602-603) mention the use of free labourers, in small numbers, to supplement slave labour. Hesiod mentions the use of these paid labourers unsurprisingly during harvest season when work on his farm would have been intense. Slavery, as opposed to free labour, was so widespread in Homeric Greece because it was relatively cheap, a master's slaves were available to work throughout the year, and slaves were readily available for purchase or through raiding. A master enjoyed limitless power over his slave, unlike a *thes* (wage labourer). A *thes* had to be paid and was transient. Large numbers of waged labourers are entirely absent from the poetry of Homer and Hesiod. Finally, the social practices of the time demanded a large agricultural surplus from the members of the community who participated in them. This enormous demand for labour, particularly from the rich who owned large estates, led to raiding for slaves and the kidnapping of individuals because such activities were both necessary and highly profitable. Although the social expectation that someone should go beyond their community for slaves is visible in Homer, Solon laments the condition of those Athenians enslaved and sold both abroad and *within* Attica. There is no reason to conclude that these Athenians were enslaved through debt; they were enslaved because powerful neighbours seized and sold them for profit. Solon's poetry criticises those who grew wealthy by practising injustice, noting in particular the stealing of sacred property and property belonging to the *demos* (Solon. 4.11-13 [West]). The poet claims that this behaviour would lead to 'evil slavery' (κακήν...δουλοσύνην), with many of the poor enslaved and sold abroad (Solon. 4.18-25 [West]), some of whom were brought home by Solon or where freed from their masters in Attica (Solon. 36.8-15 [West]). Solon laments unrestrained greed

and the theft and violence it encouraged, mentioning the enslavement of persons in the context of this behaviour. In a time of violence and disorder it is more logical to suggest that those enslaved in Attica were seized during the chaos rather than through a complex system of land tenure that is unsupported by the evidence.

#### b) *Hybris*

Theognis wrote that *koros* (surfeit, greed) had destroyed many foolish men (Πολλούς τοι κόρος ἄνδρας ἀπώλεσεν ἀφραίνοντας)<sup>257</sup> and that it had killed even more men than hunger (Theog. 605-606 [West]), implying that excess and greed were themselves a severe and destructive problem.<sup>258</sup> Perhaps the most dangerous feature of *koros* was that it was often accompanied by, or in turn produced, *hybris*.<sup>259</sup> *Hybris*, in a social or legal context, appears to have been aggressive behaviour, often entailing violence, robbery and acts of injustice that caused misery and pain for its victims. Achilles accuses Agamemnon of displaying *hybris* (*Il.* 1.203) and of inflicting *hybris* upon him (*Il.* 9.368-369), because he seized Briseis, his captive and his property.<sup>260</sup> Nestor explains that he led a retaliatory raid because the Epeians had treated his people with *hybris* (*Il.* 11.694-695). The booty is then distributed among

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<sup>257</sup> Theognis. 693-694

<sup>258</sup> Irwin (2005) 219, sees the accumulation of wealth by the Archaic elite as producing 'the circumstances in which aristocrats can be socially and politically active and, like Solon's [in Greek] *hegemonēs*, stir up *stasis* within the city.'

<sup>259</sup> *Hybris* is a difficult term to define and the range of actions, crimes and mental states it represents is broad. This thesis to an extent follows MacDowell (1976) 21, who defines *hybris* as 'having energy or power and misusing it self-indulgently.' Cf. Harris (2006) 316-317. Although MacDowell correctly stated that *hybris* did not always require a victim his study focuses heavily on the attitude of the perpetrator of *hybris*. The stance of Fisher regarding *hybris* as an offence is also followed in this thesis as his ideas and those of MacDowell are not mutually exclusive. For example, Fisher (1992) 207, 209, writes: '*hybris* can be applied to the theft of property for economic profit, if it involved the deliberate infliction of dishonour, and perhaps violence.' Fisher's view on how *hybris* fits into the wider picture of Archaic society is difficult to reconcile with the sources, as he claims that *hybris* refers to abuses almost exclusively perpetrated by what he terms 'the upper class'.

<sup>260</sup> *Hybris* does not appear particularly frequently in the *Iliad* compared with the *Odyssey* and Archaic poetry. See Hainsworth (1993) 111.



the Pylians, to many of whom the Epeians owed something (*Il.* 11.686-688). This suggests that the Epeians' *hybris* had involved stealing from the Pylians or plundering them by force. In a false tale Odysseus explains how his men gave in to their *hybris* while on a raid in Egypt, recklessly plundering, kidnapping and killing without any regard for their own safety or means of escape (*Od.* 14.262-265). The *hybris* of Odysseus' *hetairoi* is characterised by careless and wanton aggression that involved stealing, destroying and killing. Homeric *hybris* often involves acts of violence, theft, aggression and destruction, but also the flouting of accepted norms, such as an individual's right to their property.

Archaic depictions of *hybris* contain similar complaints to those of Homer against behaviour, often violent, that outraged accepted norms and inflicted pain and humiliation. In the poetry of Solon (Solon. 6 [West]) and Theognis (Theog. 153 [West]), *hybris* is said to be born from *koros*, yet in Pindar (Pind. *Ol.* 13.10) and Herodotus (Hdt. 8.77) it is *koros* that is born from *hybris*. Precisely which phenomenon generates the other is not particularly important here. What is significant is that the link between excess, greed and *hybris* was clearly understood as very strong in the Archaic period, and the dangers of *hybris* were very real to the authors of the surviving sources. Theognis feared that *hybris* would destroy the town as it did the wild centaurs (Theog. 541-2 [West]), and reminded his audience that *hybris* had already destroyed several Greek cities (Theog. 1103-4 [West]). Theognis even warned that a cycle of greed, violence and *hybris* would eventually create a tyrant (Theog. 39-52 [West]). Hesiod, living in a time before Solon and the rise of the rule of law, had already linked *hybris* with mortals who wronged each other, failed to honour the gods (Hes. *Op.* 134-136), and used violence (Hes. *Op.* 146). Hesiod not only depicted the lowest point of mankind as the dishonour of gods and

parents, but the violent rule of the strong with which he again associated *hybris* (Hes. *Op.* 189, 191-192). In the Archaic sources *hybris* appears to represent not only an abstract idea of injustice and ultimate punishment,<sup>261</sup> but the actual seizure of wealth through violence, deception or corruption. The poetry of Theognis depicts this very scenario, where men with *hybris* practice unjust deeds (ἀδίκουσ' ἔργμασι)<sup>262</sup> and are glutted with wealth got through their *hybris* (ὕβριζι πλούτῳ κεκορημένος).<sup>263</sup> The strong links between *bia* (violence), *koros* and *hybris* (Theog. 834 [West]), emphasise the destructive consequences of unrestrained *hybris* and suggest that wealth being snatched through violence motivated by greed was a problem of which the poet was acutely aware.<sup>264</sup> In lines 649-652 Theognis claims rapid social mobility is occurring, with men gaining or losing all their property in a single night. Although this may be hyperbole, it conforms with what is stated elsewhere in the corpus regarding the transfer of wealth through violence and corruption. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* violent raids for plunder are described on a number of occasions, and it is violence that enables the 'Cretan' Odysseus to achieve such dazzling success.<sup>265</sup> Hesiod's picture of a dystopian future is one where *dike* is carried out through physical violence (*cheiroidikai*), where men will sack each other's cities, and the man who practices *hybris* is honoured (Hes. *Op.* 190-194).<sup>266</sup> It is also noteworthy that both Alcaeus (Alc. 130b [West]) and Theognis (Theog. 341-50

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<sup>261</sup> E.g. Hes. *Op.* 238-239; Theognis. 151-152 [West]

<sup>262</sup> Theognis. 379 [West]

<sup>263</sup> Theognis. 751 [West]

<sup>264</sup> The *Works and Days* contains an appeal against the acquisition of wealth taken through *bia* (force) (*Op.* 320-321), indicating that the violent seizure of power and the plundering of property had already become a problem for communities before Solon wrote his poetry. For comparisons between Solon and Homer, Hesiod and other Archaic poets see Anhalt (1993) 67-114.

<sup>265</sup> Tandy (1997) 4, has claimed that there was a shift in the manner in which wealth had an effect on the elite. 'At the beginning of the eighth century, status attracted wealth; by the century's close, the obverse obtained, as wealth became the attractor of status.' Tandy's stance probably oversimplifies a very diverse and nuanced process of gaining power and wealth that existed from the eighth century and through the Archaic period.

<sup>266</sup> The claim of Gagarin (1973) 81-94, that *dike* in Hesiod cannot mean 'justice' is effectively disproved by Dickie (1978) 91ff.

[West]) appear to have been driven off their property by violence or the threat of violence.

*Hybris* was associated not only with violently wresting wealth from others but also with accumulating it through corruption, an activity that did not necessarily involve any physical acts of violence. In the context of depicting *Dike* and *Hybris* in direct competition (Hes. *Op.* 217-218) Hesiod explains how *Dike* is driven out by the δωροφάγοι (gift-devouring men) who issue crooked judgements (σκολιῆς δὲ δίκης κρίνωσι θέμιστας).<sup>267</sup> Following this explanation the poet predicts all the terrible punishments for those that practice *hybris*, cruel deeds (σχέτλια ἔργα) (Hes. *Op.* 248) and give crooked judgements (Hes. *Op.* 250). Hesiod's very close association of *hybris* with bribery and other acts of injustice not only reveals the poet's awareness of corruption within the administration of justice, but that *hybris* could entail the outrageous flouting of *dike*, particularly if such an act was motivated by greed, and not just outright violence.

The issues of injustice and corruption as potential elements in *hybris* are arguably most explicit in Theognis (Theog. 43-45 [West]). The poet complains that evil men acting with *hybris* (ὕβριζεν) corrupt the *demos* by giving unjust judgements (δίκας τ' ἀδίκοισι διδοῦσιν) purely for the sake of *kerdos* (gain, profit) and *kratos* (power). The poet believed that this behaviour was damaging enough to cause *stasis* and bloodshed (Theog. 50-51 [West]). Theognis later advises to be on one's guard against the 'crooked words' (σκολιὸν λόγον) of the man who is *adikos*, as his mind is set on taking the property of others by evil deeds (κακοῖς ἔργοις) (Theog. 1147-1150 [West]). Solon's poetry also links *hybris* with the accumulation of wealth by unjust acts (Solon. 13.7-11 [West]), again predicting *stasis* as the

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<sup>267</sup> Hes. *Op.* 221, 264.

ultimate consequence of *hybris*. Solon actually names particular perpetrators of *hybris* as the *hegemones*, the leaders of the *demos* (Solon. 4.7-8 [West]). Solon rebukes them for having an ‘unjust mind’ (ἄδικος νόος) (Solon. 4.6 [West]) and for failing to control their *koros* (Solon. 4.9-10 [West]). Later in the fragment Solon offers *eunomia*, achieved through good laws that were obeyed by all, as a solution to Attica’s problems, claiming that it will restrain *koros* and weaken *hybris*, again associating *hybris* with acts of injustice driven by greed (Solon. 4.32-34 [West]). In the subsequent lines of the fragment Solon mentions the enrichment of certain persons through unjust deeds (ἰσθίκοις ἔργμασι) and claims that some have not only been stealing from one another, but have also been appropriating sacred and public property (Solon. 4.11-13 [West]).<sup>268</sup> One scholar has claimed that both *hybris* and *stasis* are ‘in the diction of Solon catchwords for the excesses of an oligarchy’.<sup>269</sup> Solon certainly criticises the *hegemones* for their *hybris*, suggesting that the powerful were, unsurprisingly, particularly inclined to behave in this manner. Elsewhere, however, Solon writes generally that ‘men’ (*andres*) try to get wealth through *hybris* (Solon. 13.11 [West]) and that *Eunomia* will combat injustice, *koros* and *hybris* generally, rather than the crimes of a specific economic or political group (Solon. 4.32-39 [West]). It is more reasonable to conclude that Solon’s problem was with excess *in general* rather than merely the excesses of the elite.

The poetry of Theognis and Solon depicts acts of *hybris* (generally aggressive and destructive acts of violence, robbery and flagrant injustice often motivated by intense greed) as a severe problem that threatened the entire community. However, the frustrations of these men were not with particularly new

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<sup>268</sup> It is unclear if the theft of property Solon mentions here is through corruption, outright violence, or both.

<sup>269</sup> Nagy (1983) 84.

phenomena specific to sudden upheavals in their respective *poleis*. Greek communities of the eighth century were already aware that these problems existed. The society depicted in the Homeric poems associated *hybris* with the unfair and often violent seizure of property. This behaviour was provoked by the enormous demand for disposable wealth generated by the social practices and customs of Homeric society. It is therefore unsurprising that a modest farmer like Hesiod should state that greed and *hybris* were serious problems, and his ability to condemn the violence and corruption that they encouraged was in no sense revolutionary or indicative of an 'awakening' class of middling farmers. Solon, who actively attempted to find a solution to these problems, was not concerned with overpopulation, a land shortage or an overworked and exploited population of serfs, but expressed political concerns based on the need for stability and order.

*c) Lack of preventative measures*

The problems of greed, *hybris* and violence were so devastating for Greek communities from the eighth century to the sixth because of the lack of strong preventative measures and effective legal mechanisms to restrain them. Theognis wrote that the *hegemones* were causing mischief for the *polis* despite the *astoi* keeping their senses (Theog. 38-41 [West]) and claims that he was aware of corruption within the administration of justice (Theog. 43-45 [West]). For Hesiod, the corruption of the *δωροφάγοι* (Hes. *Op.* 221, 264) and of the *basileis* (*Op.* 38-39) was of particular concern because their actions drove *Dike* from the community, leading to further injustice and ultimately the terrible retribution of the gods. Hesiod wrote that the *demos* would pay for the wickedness (*atasthalia*) of the *basileis*, and depicts the injustice of the powerful and of the wicked as a direct cause of harm to

the community (Hes. *Op.* 260-262). The poet even warns that the entire *polis* would suffer because of a *kakos aner* who plots wicked deeds (ἀτάσθαλα μηχανάται) (Hes. *Op.* 238-241). It is implied that the community lacked the means to restrain its leaders despite their behaviour, and Hesiod and Theognis can suggest no preventative measures against those that would pervert justice for profit. When explaining the correct way to judge a case (actual or metaphorical), Theognis mentions the observance of several religious practices, namely the use of a *mantis* (seer), auguries and sacrifices, to assist him (Theog. 543-546 [West]). No checks, balances or penalties for the judge are apparent.

Theognis expresses his surprise that Zeus, despite his power, allows the man that is wicked (*alitos*), to share the same fate as the man that is *dikaios*, and for not making a distinction between the man that has self-control (*sophrosyne*) and the man that practices *hybris* and injustice (Theog. 372-379 [West]). The poet goes on to ask how it can be *dikaios* for a man who keeps himself from injustice and oath-breaking to receive no justice himself, and for the man who is *adikos* and *atasthalos* to live in wealth got through *hybris*, while the just men live in poverty (Theog. 743-752 [West]). Theognis only laments the situation, offering no solution, while Hesiod can only threaten that Zeus will punish *hybris* and cruel deeds (Hes. *Op.* 238-239), that *Dike* will ultimately overcome *hybris* (Hes. *Op.* 217-218), and that the gods will crush the man who, giving in to *kerdos*, takes property (*chremata*) by force or through his lying tongue (Hes. *Op.* 320-326).

Unlike Homer, Hesiod and Theognis, Solon could offer an effective solution to the problems afflicting Archaic society in the form of *Eunomia* brought about by his legislation. Solon boasts of writing *thesmoi* that were straight (*euthus*) and just (*dike*) for both the *kakoi* and the *agathoi* (Solon. 36.18-20 [West]). The language of

the fragment contrasts with the crooked words (σκολιὸν λόγον) and reliance on unjust deeds (ἀδίκους ἔργοισι πειθόμενος) that characterise Archaic descriptions of injustice and corruption. By writing laws that were just for both *kakoi* and *agathoi*, Solon was not necessarily boasting of legislating fairly for every level of society. Instead, Solon had ensured that the bad and the good received their just deserts by establishing *Eunomia* through issuing good laws and ensuring that they were obeyed, thereby claiming to have addressed the lack of effective judicial procedures. The third part of this chapter will investigate the rule of law and show why some Greeks viewed it as beneficial to their communities.

### III

The surviving literature of the Archaic period explains why some Greeks thought the rule of law was desirable and what benefits they believed it brought to their communities. In Solon's poetry we read that '*dysnomia* brings the city countless ills, while *eunomia* sets all in order as is due...it straightens out distorted judgements, pacifies the violent, brings discord to an end, brings to an end ill-tempered quarrelling. It makes all men's affairs correct and rational' (Solon. 4.32-39 [West]).<sup>270</sup> Solon explains that the rule of law not only brings order and peace, but has the power to restrain violence and prevent corrupt judgements. There is a strong theme in Solon's poetry that this kind of order and balance within society will promote restraint and good order in the *polis* and that this could be achieved through

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<sup>270</sup> This sentiment is echoed in Euripides' *Hecuba* by Agamemnon: 'for this is the interest alike of citizen and state, that the wrong-doer be punished and the good man prosper' (902-904). Also in Sophocles: 'When he (mankind) honours the *nomoi* of the land and the justice of the gods to which he is bound by oath, his city prospers' (*Ant.* 369-370).

legislation.<sup>271</sup> Solon's poetry describes an attempt to bring order and stability through legislation to a fluid society where greed, *hybris* and violence could quickly become uncontrollable.<sup>272</sup> Solon strongly criticized the greed of those who had seized the wealth of others, 'and they grow wealthy by unrighteousness...and, sparing neither sacred property nor public, seize by plunder, each one what he can' (Solon. 4.11-13 [West]). Solon distanced himself from the wealthy whose immoderate *koros* (surfeit) encouraged their avarice and desire for more wealth and asked that they moderate themselves (Solon. 4c [West]). This suggests that Solon was not working solely in the interests of the elite. It is also not evidence that Solon was a 'man of the people', as the poet recoiled from what he perceived as their greed and self-serving opportunism (Solon. 4.5-6 [West]). For Solon the problems within several levels of society would cause violence and death. As van Wees has stated, the city was 'endangered only by private greed and aggression'<sup>273</sup> but it was greed and aggression that could be found throughout Archaic society.

Solon's solution to these problems was to provide fair legislation: 'These things I did when in power, blending *bia* with *dike*, I carried out all that I promised. I wrote laws for all, for *agathoi* and *kakoi* alike, straight and just' (Solon. 36.18-20 [West]). What this moderate stance represents is the conviction that an excess of wealth and power would lead to *hybris*, injustice and tyranny. Perhaps the greatest contrast between Solon and the *basileis* was that Solon used his position to distribute rights and responsibilities among the population. As Harris notes, 'Solon does not see law and order (*Eunomia*) as one part of a simple opposition between authority

<sup>271</sup> On Solon's reforms in the *Athenian Constitution* see Rhodes (1981) 136-163.

<sup>272</sup> There is no reason to believe Solon's reforms were primarily concerned with the 'elite' and were an attempt to 'defuse intra-elite tension' as claimed by Ober (1989) 61. The language of Solon's poetry and the evidence of the *Athenian Constitution* depict Solon giving laws to all strata of society and the primary concerns expressed in his poetry are to do with greed, violence, *hybris* and avoiding tyranny; not elite competition.

<sup>273</sup> van Wees (2008) 3.



and chaos, but as a mean between the extremes of anarchy and tyranny.<sup>274</sup> Solon did not use his position to secure his own power, he never created a special position for himself or accumulated wealth or attempted to court favour. Solon even left Attica after establishing his laws. These issues and anxieties about excess, violence, injustice and tyranny had not only been present in Archaic Greece for some time but were probably widespread across the Greek world. Unlike the Medes under Deioces, Solon's poetry never considered monarchy to be the solution to disorder.

The poetry of Solon and Theognis cautions against greed, an excess of wealth (*koros*), and wealth unjustly taken or through force (*bia*). Both understood that when the powerful seized the property of others it brought harm to the community because it created a devastating cycle of violence and obviously needed to be restrained. Solon attempted to create this restraint and bring order through his laws rather than seizing power for himself. In responding to these problems Solon describes himself granting not too little or too much *geras* to the *demos* while also protecting the wealthy from harm, allowing neither side a victory that was unjust (*adikos*) (Solon. 5 [West]). Solon's concerns were for the entire free community, regardless of status, and his aim was to bring order without allowing any element of society a dangerous position of dominance.

The rule of law was a phenomenon that appears to have manifested itself in Greece in the seventh century.<sup>275</sup> The rise of this phenomenon transformed the old

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<sup>274</sup> Harris (2006) 12.

<sup>275</sup> The extent to which one can talk of 'Greek law' has been argued by a number of scholars and a summary of the debate can be found in Gagarin (2005) 29-32. Finley (1975) argued that 'Greek law' could not be referred to in any unified sense as each Greek *polis* retained its own laws. However cf. Rhodes (1997) 529-530, and also Harris (2006) 4: 'Yet though there certainly existed significant differences among these *poleis*, they were all united by certain values that enabled them to share a common Greek identity. Prominent among these values was the ideal of the "rule of law." Even if one cannot speak of early Greek law as a unified legal system, we can still discover several common features in the statutes of the Greek *poleis*, which, taken together, reflect a unified set of principles

ways of gaining power practised by the Homeric *basileis* from socially acceptable methods to dangerous and threatening acts that were perceived by many as harmful to the *polis*. This new way of viewing actions that were once tolerated is found in a broad range of evidence including poetry, historiography, and legal inscriptions. The rule of law also transformed the individuals who employed those methods from traditional rulers into *tyrannoi*; sole rulers who were not subject to the laws of the *polis* and could rule according to their whims. In Athens there appears to have been a sincere attempt to ensure that the law was universally applied. Solon wrote of writing *thesmoi* that were just for both good and bad elements of society (Solon. 36.18-20 [West]). In the fourth century Solon was also credited with creating measures that allowed the Areopagus to punish officials ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 8.4). Laws that were theoretically accessible to all, and therefore not subject to the private knowledge and discretion of a handful of judges, also began to appear in the seventh century. From about 650 BC onwards laws began to be inscribed throughout the Greek world and set up prominently in public places so anyone could read them.<sup>276</sup>

The society of the eighth and seventh centuries undoubtedly had a concept of justice and fair dealing and, as shown in Chapter I, there was also a clear and well defined notion of private property and an individual's rights over that property. However the power to administer justice and enforce norms of behaviour did not lie with publicly appointed officials who were held accountable for their actions but with the ruling *basileis* who could, and did, judge according to their whims. As was

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shared by many of these different communities in the period 650-400 BCE.' This chapter will discuss laws from numerous Greek *poleis* which contain shared principles regarding the division of power.

<sup>276</sup> As observed by Gagarin, the public display of laws indicates 'a larger public interest, not the interests of a small ruling elite, as the main motivation for the writing and public display of these laws.' (2008) 82. Compare this with the motives for Near Eastern legal inscriptions. 'Instead, they were meant to display to contemporaries the king's fairness and commitment to justice and to preserve for posterity the image of him as a just king.' Gagarin (2005) 36-37. See also Gagarin (2008) 76 and Harris (2006) 6-14.

shown in Chapter I it was socially acceptable for the *basileis* to receive gifts in return for giving orders and judgements to the community.

Although the *basileis* might suffer due to loss of popular support there were no formal checks on their power. There were no officials with authority to check Odysseus or make him accountable to the community when he acts against their wishes by protecting the father of Antioös or slaughtering the suitors. The Ithakans had no law or institution to which they could appeal that could bring Odysseus into line with their wishes. Several of the laws discussed in this chapter feature rules that order officials to act according to the law and threaten penalties for those who failed to do so, disrupting the ability of the powerful to act according to their whims. The rule of law was the phenomenon that brought about these changes and this chapter will show that the development of ideas of *eunomia* and *isonomia* was a coherent movement that changed the way Greek communities were governed during and after the seventh century. This chapter has already identified the problems faced by the *polis* in the Archaic period and showed that these were not isolated or particularly recent concerns. It will now argue that for the *polis* to achieve *eunomia* power needed to be decentralised and divided through the law. It will discuss the various strategies for dividing power and bringing about the rule of law found in the literary and epigraphic sources. It will also comment on precisely how these strategies combatted the concentration of authority found in the Homeric *basileis*.

Solon's poetry praises *eunomia* as supremely beneficial to the Athenians, 'dysnomia brings the city countless ills, while *eunomia* sets all in order as is due...it straightens out distorted judgements, pacifies the violent, brings discord to an end, brings to an end ill-tempered quarrelling. It makes all men's affairs correct and rational' (Solon. 4.31-39 [West]). Solon's poetry describes legislation as the cure for

the problems in Attica and a sure way to bring about *eunomia*. For Solon, if the polis was to achieve *eunomia* power needed to be shared, divided and distributed among the various elements of the populace in a way that was appropriate to their status. Solon did not want power to be held among strongmen who plundered the countryside at will or concentrated in the hands of a single tyrant. Herodotus also wrote that *eunomia* was brought about through legislation, writing that the Spartans were once the worst governed (κακονομώτατοι) of all the Greeks and that the change to *eunomia* was brought about by Lycurgus. According to Herodotus Lycurgus changed the laws, took care that they were not broken, and instituted the offices of Ephor and Elder (Hdt. 1.65). Despite the fact that the figure of Lycurgus is obscured by myth Herodotus' tale does give an impression of what a fifth-century Greek believed an Archaic lawgiver achieved. Herodotus believed Lycurgus' legislation and ability to ensure the laws were obeyed was the cure for Sparta's poor government.<sup>277</sup> The *polis* that is free from tyranny and ruled by *isonomia* appoints public officials by lot and ensures they obey the law by holding them accountable for their actions (Hdt. 3.80). The fear and distrust of an absolute ruler described by the literary sources is reflected in certain laws of the Greeks concerned with regulating government, making certain no official could rise above the law, and ensuring no individual could accumulate too much power.<sup>278</sup> The aspects of the laws that illustrate this concern have been identified as division of powers and jurisdiction among different officials, term-limits for officials and magistrates, penalties for officials, adding entrenchment clauses so the laws cannot be overturned, and the

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<sup>277</sup> There appears to have existed an abundance of legends regarding Lycurgus in the ancient world, although little or no historically useful information is preserved in the surviving sources. Much of the material concerning Lycurgus is late (i.e. Plutarch) and obscured by myth and moralising anecdotes. For the nature of the Lycurgan 'reforms' see Forrest (1995) 40-55, Cartledge (1979) 133-135.

<sup>278</sup> Lewis (2007) 13: 'The Greeks needed to maintain order in their cities, but not at the price of tyranny; as time passed, they developed forums in which to argue their cases openly, and (in many cases) they wrote laws to guide the decisions of those forums.'

granting of powers to boards of officials instead of one man.<sup>279</sup> What problems, exactly, were these safeguards attempting to deal with? These safeguards and the specific laws they entail will be directly compared and contrasted with the behaviour of Homeric *basileis* and tyrants. This will illustrate the contrast between Greek communities living under the rule of one man and those operating under the rule of law and explain why these measures were created.

The *Odyssey* describes the community prospering as the result of the just and benevolent rule 'of some *basileus* who, as a blameless man and god-fearing, and ruling as lord over many powerful people, upholds the way of *eudikias*, and the black earth yields him barley and wheat...because of his good leadership, and his people prosper under him' (*Od.* 19.109-114). The successful *basileus* who brought about this prosperity concentrated in his person a large number of responsibilities and powers.<sup>280</sup> Nestor, for example, is depicted as a leader in war, soldier, religious official, ambassador, public figurehead and a kind of taxman. Despite his undisputed position as head of the community Nestor retains the power to pursue private feuds and arrange marriages that increase the private prestige and power of his own family. As shown in Chapter I his sons hold important positions in the community and are used for particular tasks by Nestor, some on behalf of the community but also for Nestor's private interests. Nestor even describes a situation in which he led his people into a conflict with the Eleians partly to seek redress for his people, but also to pursue a private feud over a stolen chariot and horses (*Il.* 11.669-704). Archaic tyrants filled numerous roles just like the Homeric *basileis*, acting as soldiers, arbitrators and rulers. A number of Archaic tyrants were also remembered as

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<sup>279</sup> Harris (2006) 17-18.

<sup>280</sup> Lewis (2007) 39: 'Early judges likely rose to prominence because of their reputations for fairness, the support they could get from various factions, and their ability to end disputes and return the *polis* to a normal state of affairs.'

lawgivers or, in the case of Pisistratus, for ruling as judges and with apparent concern for justice and fairness.<sup>281</sup> The rule of these individuals, like that of the successful *basileus*, is often linked with an increase in the power and prosperity of their *poleis*.<sup>282</sup> Rather than attribute the success of the community to one man or use the law to justify the ruler's position, Archaic and Classical sources, as shown above, point to the law as the source of the community's prosperity. By contrast, the laws of the Near Eastern monarchs such as Lipit-Ishtar and Hammurabi justify the positions of these kings as well as list the rules by which the lives of their subjects would be regulated.<sup>283</sup> The prologues of the laws of both kings go so far as to claim divine sanction of their rule. They invoke the gods by name who have personally granted the king his position. Both kings are lauded for their piety towards the gods, presented as the sources of justice in their kingdoms, and their supreme position over the land, and the cities and peoples within, is emphasised.<sup>284</sup>

The Homeric poems and the codes of Lipit-Ishtar and Hammurabi describe the very kind of ruler that many Greek laws, as this chapter will show, attempted to avoid.<sup>285</sup> Aristotle believed that tyranny could arise from certain offices which held

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<sup>281</sup> Lewis (2007) 82: 'Yet certain of these early figures skirt the line between legitimate lawgiver and tyrant, acting at times with force to keep the citizens in line for the sake of their power, and at other times demonstrating their legitimacy by maintaining order in a proper sense.'

<sup>282</sup> Aristotle believed Pittacus was elected as *aisymnetes* in Mytilene to resolve the civil discord (Arist. *Pol.* 3.1285a), the Athenian Constitution states that Pheidon introduced a system of weights ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 10.2), and that Cleisthenes reformed the tribal system of Sicyon (Hdt. 5.67).

<sup>283</sup> Lewis (2007) 37, has expressed a suspicion that the laws of Hammurabi were aimed at securing the status of the king: 'The ability to put forth, apply, and enforce the law all belong to a single authority. Perhaps this 'law' is how Hammurabi, as a judge, ruled in one particular case; he may be laying down as a precedent for future cases, or rather proclaiming his own status as a shepherd to his people and the voice of the gods.'

<sup>284</sup> See Roth (1995) 23, 71: 'The prologue contains a self-praise of Lipit-Ishtar's benevolence for all of Sumer and Akkad, lists the southern Mesopotamian cities under the care of his divinely sanctioned rule, and stresses his role as restorer of justice and the social order.' 'The prologue stresses the gods' appointment of Hammurabi as ruler of his people, his role as guardian and protector of the weak and powerless, and his care and attention to the cultic needs of the patron deities of the many cities incorporated into his realm. The laws of this composition, inscribed on imposing black stone stelae, stand as evidence of Hammurabi's worthiness to rule.'

<sup>285</sup> Lewis (2009) 23: 'In this respect tyrants contributed to the creation of constitutions, rather than undermining them: as the institution of the *aisymneteia* shows, it was sometimes necessary for one

numerous important powers, giving the example of the office of *prytanis* at Miletus.<sup>286</sup> Aristotle identified offices that held too much power, or too broad a range of powers, as potential causes of tyranny. The idea that powerful offices could lead to tyranny had already become a concern by at least the sixth and fifth centuries, and Aristotle was by no means the first to voice this concern (Solon. 32-33 [West], Hdt. 1.96-102). To avoid such a concentration of power the Athenians, even before the time of Solon, had assigned certain responsibilities to different officials. For example, according to the *Athenian Constitution* the oldest and highest offices at Athens had once been the *polemarch*, who was head of the army, the *basileus* and the *archon* ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 3.1-4). These offices clearly separated military, judicial and religious responsibilities, representing a radical change from the style of ruler depicted in Homer. In the fourth century it was believed that Solon had divided the Athenians into four property classes, opening up the offices of state to the first three, but restricting the *thetes*, the lowest class, to the assembly and the law-courts ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 7.2-4). Distributing clearly defined rights and duties to different sections of the population, and further dividing judicial and executive authority, would have decentralised political power and, ideally, made it far more difficult for one man to seize control.<sup>287</sup> In the fifth century Thucydides recognised that there was such a separation of powers between the judicial and deliberative elements of government in several contemporary Greek *poleis* (Thuc. 1.73, 3.44). This strategy

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man to be given power to intervene in civil strife or to set up and enforce new laws, and in this way the distance between a tyrant and a lawgiver could be very small.' The suspicions of Solon, Herodotus and Aristotle (see above), that the administration of justice and powerful offices could be used to establish a tyranny, question this conclusion. It is not unreasonable to suggest that some early tyrants, like the Near Eastern kings and Homeric *basileis*, used the administration of justice and a reputation for fairness to justify their position.

<sup>286</sup> ἐγίγνωτο δὲ τυραννίδες πρότερον μᾶλλον ἢ νῦν καὶ διὰ τὸ μεγάλας ἀρχὰς ἐγχειρίζεσθαι τισιν, ὥσπερ ἐν Μιλήτῳ ἐκ τῆς πρυτανείας (πολλῶν γὰρ ἦν καὶ μεγάλων κύριος ὁ πρύτανις). (Arist. *Pol.* 5.1305a)

<sup>287</sup> As noted by Harris (2013) 98, the reforms of Cleisthenes may also have been an attempt to break up the local areas of support enjoyed by men like Lycurgus, Megacles and Pisistratus. On Cleisthenes' reforms see Traill (1975) and Whitehead (1986) 16-38.

of dividing power within the *polis* was already well established by the time of Thucydides and was a logical step to take considering that Solon and Herodotus had already observed that an individual's reputation for justice was not enough to justify them wielding sole power. Herodotus' story of Deioces the Mede, who seized his tyranny by establishing a reputation as a just man (Hdt. 1.96-102), and Solon's awareness that some would criticise him for not using his position to become tyrant (Solon. 32-33 [West]), reveal a strong contemporary suspicion that individuals might exploit the administration of justice to take power or justify their supreme position. The story of Deioces who judged written cases from the seclusion of his palace does not necessarily indicate that 'Herodotus and his contemporaries considered a judicial process dependent on writing as characteristic of a monarchy or tyranny.'<sup>288</sup> It is more likely that writers such as Herodotus and Solon simply considered a judicial or executive process dependent on one man as tyrannical. Pisistratus himself was remembered as a mild and just ruler who not only observed the laws (a story circulated in later centuries that he appeared in court to face prosecution ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.8) but administered them himself with great fairness. It has been suggested that Pisistratus' travelling judges existed 'to give the poor a better chance of finding legal redress for injustices suffered at the hands of the elite.'<sup>289</sup> Given the fact that the administration of justice had already been used by eastern kings and Homeric *basileis* to justify their position or accumulate power, it is more likely that Pisistratus' motives were political rather than philanthropic. Supplying a fair justice system would have increased his popularity and even undermined the power of local lords, perhaps best represented by figures like his old rivals Megacles and Lycurgus, who might otherwise have been approached to resolve disputes. Despite the degree

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<sup>288</sup> Gagarin (2008) 37.

<sup>289</sup> van Wees (2008) 37.



of popular support for and political success of figures like Pisistratus and Deioces, both Solon and Herodotus regarded a single man administering the laws with deep suspicion.

Their distrust of this phenomenon was not an isolated view, as is evidenced by the nature of many Greek lawgivers. Because a division of powers within the *polis* was necessary to avoid tyranny and monarchy, Herodotus writes that Demonax of Mantinea was summoned to reorganise the government of Cyrene. He took certain powers from Battus, the *basileus*, and made them open to the people (Hdt. 4.161-162). Although Herodotus does not provide details on what these powers were it is clear that the changes brought about by Demonax amounted to a decentralisation of authority and a redistribution of power among the community. It is also significant that Demonax was a foreigner. Lawgivers were often selected from outside the *polis* and were therefore unable to wield political power in the cities to which they gave laws. Aristotle's Archaic lawgivers were external agents deliberately brought in from other *poleis*.<sup>290</sup> The idea that some Greeks were concerned that the administration of justice, or indeed any powerful public office, could be abused or exploited to accumulate power is further supported by a number of surviving laws. A late fifth-century inscription from Athens republishing Dracon's homicide law corroborates the view found in the literature that the power to administer justice needed to be decentralised. The law states that the responsibilities of deciding a verdict and giving a penalty will be divided between two separate groups of officials, the *basileis* and the *ephetai* (IG i<sup>3</sup> 104, Lines 11-14; Meiggs and Lewis (1988) 86). Such a measure was surely aimed at reducing the kind of corruption mentioned by Hesiod, and preventing personal feuds from influencing the outcome of cases, by severing the

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<sup>290</sup> For Demonax of Mantinea see Hdt. 4.161-162 also Arist. *Pol.* 2.12.1274a.22. On the myths surrounding the Greek lawgivers see Szegedy-Maszak (1978) 199-209.

authority of the judge who delivered the verdict from that of the magistrate who issued punishments. The division of power within the judicial system of the *polis* can also be seen in action outside of Athens. A sixth-century law from Chios, although badly preserved, lists some duties assigned to certain officials, the *basileis* and the *demarchs*, and to a δημοσίη βουλή. The δημοσίη βουλή could have been composed of fifty members from each *phyle* (tribe) and probably represents an attempt at distributing deliberative and judicial power among the community as this council appears to have been authorised to hear appeals separately from the judges (Jeffery *LSAG* 336; Meiggs and Lewis (1988) 8; *Nomima* 1:62, Lines C.1-9). The entire inscription is remarkable for its clear concern with distributing authority among separate groups and officials. A seventh-century law from Tiryns states that, regarding the unpaid fines of officials, the matter may be handed by the *epignomon* over to the *ochlos* (*SEG* 30.380; *Nomima* 1:78; Koerner (1993), 31). Precisely why this might happen, and what powers the *epignomon* had as opposed to the *ochlos*, is not clear, but it is significant that in this area more than one body or official could have authority. A sixth-century law of Elis from Olympia appears to state that the consent of a council of five hundred and of the *damos* are necessary to make changes to the law (*Nomima* 1:109). Each body was therefore unable to act alone in regard to altering the law and thus checked the power of the other. A seventh-century law from Dreros on Crete regarding term limits on the office of *kosmos* states that three groups of officials, not just the *kosmos*, but also the *demioi* and the Twenty, will take the oath to abide by that particular law (Jeffery *LSAG* 311; Meiggs and Lewis (1969) 2; Koerner (1993) 90.).<sup>291</sup> This presumably provided a basic check on the power of

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<sup>291</sup> See Hölkeskamp (1992) 95, for these early decrees. ‘These magistrates must obviously have a minimum degree of authority to implement, or enforce the implementation of, the norms and rules that refer to their functions. That is exactly what much of early legislation relies on and indeed revolves around. Not only does it presuppose the existence of such definable, specialized, impersonal

the *kosmos* as numerous officials, besides the *kosmos* himself, were bound by oath to ensure the office-holder abided by the term limit. Should the *kosmos* overstep his power several groups of officials were bound to act against him. In order to enforce these laws the Greek *poleis* often gave powers to boards of public officials rather than individuals. Many boards of officials are attested for the Archaic period in literary and epigraphic sources. The inscription of Drakon's homicide law names four separate boards of officials. Two of these, the *Poletai* and the *Hellanotamiai*, handled the public money supplied for the inscription. The other two boards, the *Basileis* and the *Ephetai*, were involved in the process of prosecution in regard to the homicide law (IG I<sup>3</sup> 104; Meiggs and Lewis (1988) 86). Other boards of public officials are discussed in this chapter, including the Spartan Ephors, the *Demioi* and the Twenty of Dreros, the *Basileis* and *Ephetai* at Athens, and the *Basileis* of Olympia. *The Constitution of the Athenians* also mentions over a dozen boards of officials operating in Athens between 600 and 400.<sup>292</sup> Many Greek *poleis* adopted a policy of distributing powers to boards rather than concentrating it in individuals because this prevented the *polis* from making one man too powerful, a possibility identified and feared by Solon (Solon. 9-11 [West]). The distribution of powers to boards allowed officials to monitor their colleagues and therefore facilitated accountability, one of the crucial aspects of *isonomia* described by Herodotus (Hdt. 3.80). In light of this fact there is no reason to conclude that collegiality was solely 'a consequence of the jealousy that accompanied Greek ambition'.<sup>293</sup> Considering the suspicion of monarchical rule found in Archaic and Classical sources, it is far more

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and transferable functions, but this kind of 'institutionalized' public duties - namely obligations of implementation, tasks of control and enforcement - is also regularly an important, if not the central element of many early statutes.'

<sup>292</sup> For a list see Harris (2006) 22.

<sup>293</sup> Sealey (1994) 115. The point that boards are instituted to create checks and balances is also missed by Donlan (1997b) 40: 'The system of officials and boards...also gave the landed nobility a platform for social control'.

likely that collegiality was a sincere attempt at distributing power and providing checks on the power of officials by refusing to concentrate their authority. Furthermore, the surviving laws that divided powers among boards generally do not declare the necessary status or qualifications for the men who would hold the office, therefore contradicting the idea that these offices were primarily for restraining elite competition.<sup>294</sup>

The literary and epigraphic evidence listed above suggests that devolving power was one method employed by the Greek *poleis* to ensure that the apparatus for administering the laws was carefully divided and kept away from the hands of one man.<sup>295</sup> The *poleis* from which these laws originate all pursued this particular method regardless of substantive or procedural differences in the laws themselves. The fact that these measures appeared across the Greek world in the Archaic period and were so widely employed suggests a relatively popular move away from the arbitrary government of the *basileis* and a sincere belief in the effectiveness of these measures. This is not to claim that the movement towards the rule of law was uniform across the Greek world. Macedonia and Cyprus maintained kings well into the fourth century, and successful sole rulers were able to thrive in Greek Sicily well into the fifth century.

Once powers and responsibilities were given out by Archaic *poleis* they were no longer held until the holder died or became physically or economically incapable of ruling, as was the case with the *basileis* depicted in Homer. Achilles feared his father's old age would reduce his status and make him vulnerable, not the

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<sup>294</sup> e.g. van Wees (2008) 36: 'These are best understood as aiming to minimise elite *stasis* by limiting the amount of formal power and attendant prestige...and thus sharing out 'the honours' (*timai*) as widely as possible among the elite.'

<sup>295</sup> Thomas (1996) 30, has observed that written law was 'fundamental in checking arbitrary judgement' and unwritten law was 'open to arbitrary judgement and inconsistency.'

termination of his time in any public office (*Od.* 11.495-497). While Hektor lived he prayed that his son Astyanax might rule Troy yet his wife predicted poverty and humiliation for him should Hektor be killed. Andromache even goes as far as to predict that Astyanax will be physically abused with impunity because of his humiliating change in fortune (*Il.* 22.488-489). In Homeric society a reduction in power did not derive from the loss of an office but from loss of ability and status. There was no limit to the duration of the rule of the *basileis* as long as they retained the physical, social and economic strength to maintain their dominance. The rise of the rule of law brought limits on the duration for which an official held their powers or how often a man could hold the same office. Solon was credited with limiting the time served as *archon* to one year ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 8.2) and with limiting the number of times an individual could hold certain offices in Athens ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 62.3). Homeric *basileis* did not give up their powers after a set time.

From the Archaic period onwards the Greeks devised laws that could terminate the power of leaders after a set time or forbid them from returning to power. The law from Dreros regarding the office of *kosmos* prohibits a man who held the office to be *kosmos* again for ten years. ‘When a man has been *kosmos*, for ten years that same man shall not be *kosmos*. If he should become *kosmos*, whatever judgments he gives, he himself shall owe double, and he shall be useless<sup>296</sup> as long as he lives, and what he does as *kosmos* shall be as nothing’ (Jeffery *LSAG* 311; Meiggs and Lewis (1969) 2; Koerner (1993), 90.). Similarly a sixth-century law from Gortyn forbids the same man from being *kosmos* within three years, occupying the office of *gnomon* within ten, or from being *kosmos* for foreigners within five (*IC* IV.14.G-P). A fifth-century inscription from Attica establishes a board of five men to

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<sup>296</sup> ‘This means either ‘deprived of the right to some or all offices’ or ‘deprived of citizen rights’.’ Fornara (1983) 14.

manage the money belonging to Demeter and Kore and states that these officials shall hold office for one year only (Fornara (1983) 106). The fact that some of the earliest examples of Greek law in existence are concerned with limiting the duration of magistrates' powers suggests that this was an early and very serious concern for Archaic Greek legislators. Term limits for high office were necessary to prevent individuals from using their positions as a steppingstone to tyranny, a suspicion entertained by both Solon and Aristotle.

In Andocides' speech *Against Alcibiades* we read that 'obedience to the magistrates and the laws' is the best safeguard for the city. At the time of writing Andocides was not expressing a particularly novel sentiment in this speech. From the Archaic period onwards the Greeks established laws that could enforce obedience and punish leaders and magistrates for not laying down their offices or for being corrupt or unjust, essentially ensuring that even the most powerful would remain obedient to the laws, that no magistrate could be above the law and that all would be held accountable for their actions. As Herodotus has the Spartan king Demaratus explain to Xerxes. 'They are free – yes – but not entirely free; for they have a master, and that master is Law, which they fear much more than your subjects fear you' (Hdt. 7.104). Before the seventh century there existed no legal means to make rulers accountable. Homer and Hesiod both say the gods will ultimately punish injustice. In the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and the *Works and Days*, there are no set legal penalties for the *basileis* should they not uphold justice and certainly no political authority with the power to enforce such penalties.<sup>297</sup> During and after the seventh century, however,

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<sup>297</sup> This is not to say that the people who inhabited Homer's world were incapable of censuring their leaders. Homer depicts communities capable of coordinated action against those who harm the community or act against its will. Athene, disguised as Mentor, criticises the Ithakans for not checking the excesses of the suitors, implying they had the power to do so (*Od.* 2.239-241). The father of Antinoös had fled for his life when the people attempted to lynch him for raiding their

the Greeks' tremendous distrust of those given power is evidenced by the penalties they set out for officials who failed to perform their duties.<sup>298</sup> In a law of c.500 from Lyttos in Crete we find that the *Kosmos* can be tried by judges (*SEG* 35.991; Koerner (1993) 87). A sixth-century law from Eretria declares a fine for officials who do not act according to the law (ἀπὸ ῥετῶν) regarding what might be the payment of fines or debts (*Nomima* 1.91).<sup>299</sup> Another sixth-century inscription from Eretria lists a fine for the Archos if he himself fails to collect certain fines imposed on others (Koerner (1993) 73). A seventh-century law from Tiryns appears to contain a similar penalty, threatening the Platiwoinarchoi with a double fine if they do not fine the Platiwoinoi should they commit a transgression that has not survived in the inscription (*SEG* 30.380; Koerner (1993) 31).<sup>300</sup> A sixth or fifth-century law from Arcadia lists a punishment for the *damiorgos* if he does not collect fines (Koerner (1993), 35). These laws are significant because they employ a separate group of officials as enforcers over other bodies of officials. This facilitated accountability and balanced the powers of officials by granting the authority to punish them to independent groups. These laws existed to ensure that the behaviour of officials conformed to the law rather than private interest and profit, addressing the problem of corruption already apparent in Hesiod. These safeguards and deterrents are conspicuously absent in Homer. The case depicted on the shield of Achilles presents a monetary incentive to encourage the judges to give a just verdict,

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friends, the Thesprontians (*Od.* 16.424-429). When Odysseus informs his father he has killed the suitors he admits to being deeply troubled by the potential consequences: 'But now I am terribly afraid in my heart that speedily the men of Ithaka may come against us here' (*Od.* 24.353-354). Furthermore both Telemachus (*Od.* 2.40-79) and Eupheithes (*Od.* 24.426-437) appeal to the assembly to act against those who they claim are harming the community.

<sup>298</sup> Van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994-95) 1:393

<sup>299</sup> See translation and note 49 of Gagarin (2008) 58-59.

<sup>300</sup> The sixth century law from Chios (Jeffery *LSAG* 336; Meiggs and Lewis (1988) 8; *Nomima* 1:62, Lines C.1-9) may also have contained penalties for officials who accepted bribes, see Jeffery (1956) 162. The inscription, however, is missing key words and is interpreted by Oliver (1959) 300, as describing the levying of a tithe.

but no formal checks on the discretion of the judges are apparent (*Il.* 18.497-508). The poet was also aware that men in ‘violent assembly’ might pass crooked judgements (σκολιάς...θέμιστας) and in doing so drive out *dike*. The only effective deterrent against this that the poet presents is the anger of Zeus (*Il.* 16.386-388) and of the gods who examine those men that practice *hybris* and those that practice *eunomia* (*Od.* 18.483-487). The penalties listed in the Archaic laws above were there to incentivise officials to act according to the law.

The *kosmos* at Gortyn could also be tried and fined, probably for the unlawful seizure of an individual (*IC IV.72: 1.51-5*).<sup>301</sup> This law aimed at preventing the unlawful arrest of individuals by threatening the appropriate magistrate with a penalty. The laws placed penalties on magistrates for not acting in accordance with the interests of the community, thereby discouraging leniency towards enemies and traitors. These laws enforced behaviour that was radically different from the practices of the leaders of Homeric society. Men like Odysseus used their power to protect even those persons whose behaviour could be regarded as deeply harmful to the community or even treasonable. Additionally, when Odysseus rescued the father of Antinoös from suffering popular justice he acted privately and against the popular interest (*Od.* 16.424-429).

A penalty is also inscribed against the Locrian *demiourgoi* in a late sixth-century inscription. Should they profit in excess of what is prescribed their profit will be taken and made sacred to Apollo (Meiggs and Lewis (1988) 13B; Fornara (1983) 33). Agamemnon is accused of hoarding treasure which he *ought* to have

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<sup>301</sup> There are several interpretations of this law. See Gagarin (2004) 179, 182 note 30. This particular law presents a stark contrast with the behaviour of Homeric *basileis* and tyrants. As stated in Chapter I the *basileis* of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* make dire threats against the persons of other free individuals, usually because they are perceived enemies or simply men who had offended them. Tyrants were quick to seize and arrest rivals as well as dissenters or personal enemies, as Miltiades did in the Chersonese (*Hdt.* 6.39).



distributed to his followers. His apparently aggressive and greedy attitude is mentioned by Achilles (*Il.* 1.149-171) and by Thersites (*Il.* 2.225-241). Achilles, a man of considerable status, has a personal grievance with Agamemnon, but Thersites' complaint perhaps represents a more significant problem: that a great man might use his position to profit by the community's labour, regardless of the accepted conventions of booty distribution or existing conceptions of fair dealing. A law such as the one that regulated the Locrian *demiourgoi* would ensure that public workers or officials could not profit in excess of what the community decreed.

Athenian citizens could also make complaints to the Council against any public official though the matter would be handed over to the courts for prosecution ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 45.2). This avenue of redress is completely absent in Homer and also under Archaic tyrants as no third party could be approached that held the power to check these individuals. These laws addressed problems found in Homer and the Archaic period. They penalised men in positions of power, like Odysseus, who acted privately and against the interests of the community, regardless of their status. There exists in Homer no individual, institution or law like those listed above, with the power to punish these men on behalf of the community.

The Spartan kings, despite their hereditary position and descent from Herakles, were also held accountable and subject to the law. Leotychides was tried and banished (Hdt. 6.72, 85), Cleomenes was tried on a charge of bribery (Hdt. 6.82), and Demaratus was deprived of his office as king on the grounds that he had no right to the office (Hdt. 6.65-66). Priam accuses his sons of incompetence and of taking wealth from their people that they were not entitled to (*Il.* 24.261-262). Despite the obvious problems they have caused Priam's sons cannot be tried like the Spartan kings. Likewise seventh and sixth-century figures like Cypselus and

Periander who directly harmed the community by murdering citizens or seizing property could not be brought to trial. Although, as stated in Chapter I, the community depicted in the Homeric poems was capable of coordinated action against an individual, even its ruler, there was no law to regulate this action or to ensure that the community permanently held the power to check and punish its leaders as the Spartan Ephors did.<sup>302</sup> The idea that the *demos* should, and remarkably *ought*, to assert itself against its leaders was certainly not an innovation of Greek democracy or even of the Archaic and Classical periods. The Ithakans are encouraged to take action against the suitors, despite the fact that the suitors were the leaders of the community (*Od.* 2.46-79, 229-241). Arguably the greatest threat to Odysseus and his family comes when Eupheithes leads more than half of the assembly to destroy them in revenge for the deaths of the suitors (*Od.* 24.426-469). Thersites encourages the Achaian army to resent Agamemnon because he keeps their plunder for himself, regardless of Agamemnon's considerable status (*Il.* 2.225-242). The Achaians never rise against Agamemnon but they express their anger at his treatment of Achilles by fighting only half-heartedly for him (*Il.* 14.49-51). Hektor calls the Trojans cowards for not stoning Paris for all the harm he has caused, suggesting a very strong level of resentment against leaders who caused injury to the community and a clear idea of how leaders *ought* to behave (*Il.* 3.56-57). If the *basileis* of Homer proved incompetent, corrupt or acted against the wishes of the community there was no guarantee that they would be held accountable. Several significant figures, such as the father of Antinöos and Paris, are threatened with popular justice but no formalised procedure to ensure accountability is present in Homer or Hesiod.

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<sup>302</sup> See *Od.* 2.40-79; 16.426-430; 23.117; 24.426-437.

The poetry of Theognis asks that the *demos* be yoked and goaded like beasts of burden, for they are a *demos* that loves their masters (φιλοδέσποτον) more than any other (Theog. 847-850 [West]). Considering that the poems of Homer encourage the *demos* to act against bad leaders, it is likely that Theognis was expressing his frustration with the *demos* for not asserting itself against bad leaders. *Despotes* means one that owns slaves, therefore Theognis' lines equate the *demos* with slaves; property with which one can do as one pleases. The poet was voicing his frustration with the *demos*, not actually asking that they be abused.

Public officials, in contrast to Homeric *basileis*, were also restricted in their capacity to harm or kill citizens during and after the Archaic period. As Hansen notes, 'Several of the orators state with approval the rule that no citizen could be executed without due process of law...“no execution without trial” (*medena akriton apokteinai*) was felt to be a right which all citizens enjoyed'.<sup>303</sup> That a citizen had an inalienable right to be free from the threat of arbitrary physical punishment and arbitrary execution that was also recognised by the community and upheld by its laws is not found in Homer or Hesiod. In Homer there are a number of instances where *basileis*, on their own initiative, beat, kill, or contemplate killing, members of the community without reference to any process that might be regarded as a trial. There are however numerous sources from later periods, mainly from Athens, that indicate the presence of laws that protected individuals from this kind of arbitrary punishment. Beyond Athens, one of the Gortyn laws inscribed in the fifth century forbids the unlawful seizure of a free man or a slave before their trial and lists several fines as punishment (IC IV.72:1.2-2.2), thereby restraining the power of individuals to harm or kill other people. The behaviour of *basileis*, who are depicted

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<sup>303</sup> Hansen (1998) 92-93.

killing on a whim or to secure their position, offers a stark contrast with the law of Gortyn which offered protection to the persons of citizens.

The Greeks seem to have distrusted attempts to alter the laws as much as they distrusted their leaders and public officials. Their reasons for doing so were both practical and to reduce the threat of tyrannical rule. During the Persian constitutional debate Herodotus has Otanes say that the rule of a single man is the worst form of government because a *monarchos* will surely disturb the ancestral laws, ‘(a *monarchos*) breaks up the structure of ancient tradition and law (*nomaia patria*), forces women to serve his pleasure, and puts men to death without trial’ (Hdt. 3.80). It is striking that Herodotus lists the overthrow of the law alongside the murder of citizens as one of the most serious consequences of monarchical rule. Thucydides associated a lack of regard for the established laws with a breakdown of social norms and the proliferation of crime and greed. ‘These parties were not formed to enjoy the benefits of the established laws (τῶν κειμένων νόμων), but to acquire power by overthrowing the existing regime; and the members of these parties felt confidence in each other not because of any fellowship in a religious communion, but because they were partners in crime’ (Thuc. 3.82). Aeschines explained that the difference between tyranny and democracy is that the subjects of a tyrant are governed by their master’s whims, while in a democracy the established laws (τοῖς νόμοις τοῖς κείμενοις) govern the people and that the community will benefit by obeying these laws (τοῖς νόμοις τοῖς κείμενοις πείθεσθαι) (Aesch. 1.4-6). If the established laws were regarded as beneficial to the community then it is understandable that attempts to alter them were regarded with suspicion. This explains the origins of a story mentioned by Demosthenes; that a man proposing a new law to the Locrians must do so with a noose around his neck. He would be strangled if the law did not pass in

order to protect the κειμένους...νόμοις (Dem. 24.139). These passages all suggest that it was not blind adherence to tradition that inspired such extraordinary reverence for the laws. Antiphon believed that it was the fact that the established laws had remained unchanged for so long that was proof of their excellence (5.14-15).

To prevent attempts to change or overthrow the laws the Greek *poleis* introduced entrenchment clauses. These clauses generally declared attempts to alter a particular law illegal and threatened appropriate punishments. An early sixth-century inscription from the Heraion at Argos threatens a curse for those who ignore or attempt to alter the laws. It is possible that the inscription also threatens exile and confiscation of property as the punishment though this is unclear (*IG* IV.506; *Nomima* 1.100).<sup>304</sup> A sixth-century Locrian law regarding land threatens the man who would propose further division of that land, or create *stasis* over the issue of land, with a curse, confiscation of property, and the destruction of his house (Meiggs and Lewis (1988) 13A.7-14, Fornara (1983) 33.A). Land seems to have been a particularly sensitive issue in the Archaic period as it could potentially be used to buy political support. Menelaus explains that he would have driven the natives from a city under his control in order to settle his friend and ally Odysseus there with his own people (*Od.* 4.176-177). This tactic was actually employed by Arcesilaus, the *basileus* of Cyrene. After being driven out in a civil war, Arcesilaus fled to Samos where he collected supporters with a promise of land as payment (*Hdt.* 4.163). The Locrian law sought to prevent such political interference in property. A sixth-century inscription from Olympia declaring a hundred-year alliance between the Eleans and the Heraeans threatens the citizen, official or *damos*, who harms the inscription with a fine (Fornara (1983) 25; Meiggs and Lewis (1988) 17.). This particular clause

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<sup>304</sup> See Gagarin (2008) 63, cf. Van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994) 354-356.

aimed to ensure the long-lasting alliance ran its course without private or political interference. Sole rulers or would-be rulers were not so easily restrained and used their positions, or just outright force, to influence or seize control of policy. The severity of the above penalties reflects the suspicion of change to the established laws found in the literary sources and represents a consistent strategy employed by the Greek *poleis* to preserve the established laws that were regarded as so beneficial to the community. Entrenchment also prevented individuals from interfering politically with private and public property, or making sudden and dramatic changes to the domestic and foreign policies of the state.

The above examples show that from the seventh century onwards there was a movement across the Greek world to divide and limit power through the rule of law.<sup>305</sup> In the centuries before this development the many functions of the various public officials found in *poleis* like Archaic Gortyn and Classical Athens had previously been concentrated in the person of the *basileus*. The *basileis* found in Homer and Hesiod had been military leaders and protectors, judges and arbitrators, religious functionaries and ambassadors. As the next chapter will show, the practices employed by the *basileis* and the Archaic tyrants to gain power would remain consistent from the eighth century to the fifth. Not only was power originally concentrated in the local ruler, but powerful men were encouraged to abuse their position to accumulate wealth and slaves. Gaining power in Homeric and Archaic Greece required engagement with social practices that in turn demanded the expenditure of large amounts of wealth in the form of treasure and agricultural produce. Because this society created such a limitless demand for wealth and labour

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<sup>305</sup> For the shared principles of the Greeks concerning international law see Chaniotis (2004) 185-213.

it incentivised the powerful to raid for wealth and slaves and pervert or ignore accepted norms of justice to acquire bribes or seize the property of others.

### *Conclusion*

The evidence does not support a picture of Archaic Greece that was afflicted by overpopulation, conflict between clearly defined classes or shaken by a hoplite revolution. Both archaeological and literary sources contradict any such theories. The archaeological evidence does not corroborate Snodgrass' burial data or theory regarding a dramatic population increase. Instead it demonstrates that population growth in the Archaic period was not 'explosive' and that overseas settlements were often founded with the aim of trade and profit, rather than the sustenance of the surplus population. The theory of a challenge to the traditional aristocracy from an Archaic *nouveau riche* rests on precarious interpretations of a handful of passages from Homer, Hesiod and Archaic poetry. These are easily disproven by an interpretation of these sources that takes their evidence together as part of a broader picture of Archaic practices and society. The literary sources depict a society where social mobility was fluid and a familiar occurrence, where trade occurred without class prejudice, and where an aristocracy simply did not exist. *Kakoi* were not 'the poor' or indeed any social class, but are described, particularly by Theognis, as the individuals who outraged the accepted norms and customs of society and were therefore reviled. The Archaic elite were not usurped by *kakoi* or by a rising middle-class of hoplites. Hoplite formations are not depicted in Archaic iconography and descriptions of combat in Archaic sources remain consistent with Homeric depictions of combat. Like the imposition of classes on Archaic Greece, the

discussion regarding Solon and systems of land tenure and 'economic reform' in Attica is anachronistic. The concerns of Solon's poetry are with establishing law and order and suppressing the violence caused by those who greedily seized the property of others. The problems of the Archaic period stemmed from the need of the elite to collect wealth and slaves which led to raiding, violence and corruption. This behaviour encouraged lawlessness and disorder which threatened the community with death, destruction, slavery, *stasis* and ultimately tyranny. The consequences of this behaviour were so severe because of the absence of strong legal mechanisms that could punish wrongdoers and impose order.

The innovation that brought change to the Greek *poleis* and began in the seventh century was the rule of law. This phenomenon caused the concentration of power in the hands of one man to become incompatible with ideas of *eunomia* and *isonomia*. These ideas were lauded by writers like Solon and Herodotus because they were ultimately beneficial to the community. The laws that enabled these concepts to operate in the Archaic *polis* combatted the problems of greed, *hybris*, corruption and violence repeatedly attested in eighth-century and Archaic sources. The success of these ideas required the application of certain principles such as the divided powers and accountability of public officials so carefully prescribed in many of the above laws. These principles could not possibly be applied to a Homeric *basileus* because his power inevitably placed him above the law. The power of Homeric *basileis* also rested on very personal methods, such as personal ties, violent raids and gift-giving, that were often rendered illegal by the laws listed above, subverting their original status as generally normative practices. Archaic and Classical writers depicted the sole ruler, often referred to as *tyrannos*, ruling as the polar opposite to the rule of law and to the exclusion of *isonomia*, *eunomia* and *eleutheria*. The fear of a sole ruler is



reflected in the various safeguards the Greeks placed in their laws to prevent the concentration of power and the abuses of power described by Homer, Hesiod, and the Archaic poets. These measures did not have a narrow view to restricting elite competition. The clear concern of these early laws was with regulating government, making certain no official could be above the law, and ensuring no single individual could accumulate too much power. The laws that appeared after 650 tackled specific problems, abuses and anxieties that existed under the rule of the Homeric *basileis* and throughout the Archaic period. The next chapter will discuss the Archaic tyrants themselves and show that their methods of gaining and maintaining power were the same as those of the Homeric *basileis*.

### Chapter III: Archaic Tyrants

As noted in the previous chapters, the early Greek tyrants were the same style of leader that had ruled and been accepted by the society depicted in the Homeric poems. It was the personal achievements, private wealth, and strength of the Homeric leader that earned, justified and maintained his power and status. It is, however, necessary to acknowledge the fact that *basileis* also maintained popular support by observing and upholding justice and the customary norms and religious rituals of their community. They were not simply strongmen, but used a diverse set of methods to take and hold power. Chapter II showed that the traditional ideas of tyranny as a new phenomenon are misleading, and there was no linear transition from pre-Archaic kings to ‘traditional aristocrats’<sup>306</sup> and then tyrants. The adherence of scholars to these ideas has resulted in a search for the causes of tyranny and the rise of unreliable theories regarding economic and social conditions in the Archaic period.<sup>307</sup> As shown in the previous chapter, there is no firm evidence for fixed social classes in Archaic Greece, of an Archaic aristocracy,<sup>308</sup> of class conflict<sup>309</sup> or a

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<sup>306</sup> Smith (1989) 10. The first ancient source to make a clear distinction between the tyrant and supposedly legitimate sole-rulers was Thucydides, writing probably in the late fifth century (Thuc. 1.13).

<sup>307</sup> This has occurred despite the fact that Robert Drews called for an end to the insistence that tyrants were social and economic reformers as early as 1972. Drews (1972) 132.

<sup>308</sup> Stahl (1987) 104-105, for example, characterises Archaic tyranny as a struggle between aristocrats: ‘Die Konsequenz jedenfalls der sich im Laufe der archaischen Zeit zu unterschiedlichen Zeitpunkten und in unterschiedlichem Ausmaß verändernden Handlungsbedingungen und Möglichkeiten ist, daß einzelne Aristokraten ihre vergrößerten Spielräume nutzen und die sich ihnen bietenden neuen Möglichkeiten und Mittel für ihre Zwecke im aristokratischen Machtkampf einsetzen. Diese Mobilisierung zusätzlicher Kräfte intensiviert und verschärft die Stasis, ja sie hat sie in bestimmten Fällen zu einer längerfristig definitiven Entscheidung bringen können: zur Etablierung einer Tyrannis.’

<sup>309</sup> This view is in direct opposition to that held by scholars such as Mossé (1969) 2: ‘En fait, les auteurs anciens déjà avaient constaté que partout l’apparition de la tyrannie est liée à un déséquilibre, déséquilibre social essentiellement. Le tyran se présente alors le plus souvent comme un chef populaire, hostile à l’aristocratie, et qui contribue partout à détruire non seulement le régime politique, mais aussi les cadres sociaux imposés par cette aristocratie. Mais à la place, il ne construit rien.’ As shown in the previous chapter, no Greek source predating, and including, Herodotus represents tyrants as hostile to the aristocracy. Not only is there no evidence for the existence of an Archaic ‘aristocracy’ in these sources but any secure references to class conflict of any kind are

population explosion. As very little time, perhaps only half a century, separates Homeric society from the period popularly recognised as the Archaic period, the developments of the seventh and sixth centuries must be seen in the context of the practices and customs of Homeric Greece. The poems of Homer and Hesiod were created before the advent of the rule of law, and the social expectations of their audiences are reflected in the fact that the *basileis* and their behaviour are portrayed as normative. There are naturally complaints against certain actions of the *basileis* that are perceived as unjust, such as violence, theft of property and unfair decisions, but the *basileis*' rule of the community is not ideologically unacceptable. Their rule is taken for granted in the poems and there are no ideological complaints against the personal nature of their rule, the extent of their powers or the absence of checks on those powers. The spread of the rule-of-law ideology c.650 completely changed the attitude of its adherents towards these customs and in particular the style of leadership practised by the *basileis*. The new laws that appeared from the seventh century onwards not only tackled the abuses and perceived injustices inherent in the rule of the *basileis* but quickly made rule by one man deeply threatening and inappropriate. In the view of its adherents, the rule of law transformed once normative and traditional rulers into tyrants. By the fifth and fourth centuries tyrants would be viewed as dangerous and deviant to such an extent that their personalities were increasingly stereotyped by deeply hostile sources. Their methods of taking power, despite not being the primary concern of the authors of our sources, are yet perceivable and remain consistent with those of the Homeric *basileis*.

The transition of the perception of one-man rule from a socially acceptable norm to a threatening and destructive phenomenon was facilitated by the division of

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conspicuously absent. Mossé's statement is simply not supported by the earliest evidence, but is rather a reflection of the later and highly anachronistic sources that postdate Herodotus.

powers and the institution of the checks and balances that were an intrinsic part of the rule of law.<sup>310</sup> The term *basileus* continued to be applied to public office and a new word was therefore required to describe the unrestricted rule of one man. The origin of the word *turannos* has not been securely identified due to the very small number of surviving sources from the Archaic period. It is not present in Homer or Hesiod, and first appears in surviving Greek literature in the poetry of Archilochus. It is generally assumed that the word came into the Greek language from the east, with Lydia being the most likely place of origin, although other regions have been suggested.<sup>311</sup> The early tyrants represented individuals who persisted in using the traditional methods of the *basileis* to gain and maintain their power despite the development of measures to limit and check authority.<sup>312</sup> In order to prove that the Homeric leaders and the early tyrants represent continuity this chapter will assess the means the tyrants used to gain and maintain power. Like those of Homeric society these constituted a series of personal methods and arrangements. The tyrants of Archaic Greece will be discussed as a group in the first part, and Pisistratus and his family will be used as a case study in the second part. Chapter IV will investigate Classical tyrants as these have generally been separated from their Archaic

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<sup>310</sup> Tyranny was therefore not a phenomenon that appeared at a specific moment in Greek history, as is believed by most scholars. E.g. Mossé (1969) 2.

<sup>311</sup> Hippias of Elis believed that the word *turannos* appeared in Greek in the time of Archilochus, in the seventh century (*FGrH* 6 F 6). The poetry of Archilochus does in fact contain the earliest surviving use of the word *turannos* and the body of poems has been dated to the seventh century. See Jacoby (1941) 97-109; Pouilloux (1964) 9. The possibility that *turannos* is of Lydian origin is entertained by Andrewes (1956) 22, and Lewis (2009) 7. Austin (1990) 289, believes the word originated in Asia Minor. Parker (1998) 145-149, has identified Hittite and Old Testament terms for rulers and judges that are similar to *turannos*. See also O'Neill (1986) 26-40.

<sup>312</sup> The individual tyrant, although supported by his friends and family, remained the driving force behind his own ascension to power. As noted by Stahl (1987) 61: 'Alle diesbezüglichen Angaben heben nun, erstens, ganz entschieden die Führerpersönlichkeiten als Triebkräfte für die Entstehung der jeweiligen Stasis-Gruppierung hervor. Dies ist am besten an der Gruppierung des Peisistratos zu beobachten: Ausgangspunkt ist dessen ganz persönliches Streben, Tyrann zu werden (vgl. 1,59,3).' Stahl is absolutely correct to single out Pisistratus as the best example of this. It was Pisistratus' popularity that brought to his side a significant proportion of the Athenian community and his control, as head of the family, over territory and private wealth that gave him such substantial military support.

predecessors by historians on various grounds. This chapter will generally attempt to use the oldest sources as far as is possible, as this gives a better understanding of Archaic society and avoids the anachronisms and prejudices of the later material.<sup>313</sup>

Although the first instance of the word *turannos* is in Archilochus, the first articulate descriptions of the tyrant as a sole ruler, as politically deviant and fundamentally harmful to the community are found in the poetry of Theognis and Solon. In Solon's poetry the antithesis of tyranny, the rule of law and a state of *eunomia*, are depicted as an attainable goal rather than the accepted and established norm. But from Herodotus onwards many Greek sources accepted the rule of law as the norm and described personal sole-rule as threatening, destructive and abnormal.<sup>314</sup> Herodotus called this phenomenon monarchy *and* tyranny.<sup>315</sup> This prejudice against tyrants distorted the view of later writers, particularly fourth-century philosophers, who applied certain stereotypes to the tyrant's personality. The historical record of Archaic tyrants has suffered in particular from later writers' anachronisms and application of moral stereotypes to the tyrants. The philosophers

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<sup>313</sup> Salmon (1984) 189, for example, notes that the account of Nicolaus of Damascus' account regarding Cypselus 'reeks of two fourth century tendencies: rationalization and assimilation to contemporary practice. Many of the details belong to the textbook tyrant of fourth century theorists – especially demagoguery and accusations of plots by the tyrant's enemies.' The contrast between the accounts of Herodotus and *The Constitution of the Athenians* regarding Archaic Attica is noted by Cawkwell (1995) 75: 'The whole, story, as noted by Herodotus, presents an utterly different picture from that of the Constitution of the Athenians, not of an Athens divided by constitutional and social interests, but of an Attica divided by local loyalties'. In both ancient examples we can see substantial anachronisms and limited understanding of the social realities of Archaic Greece.

<sup>314</sup> Tyranny is also portrayed as dangerous, destructive and politically deviant in tragedy. Creon's authoritarian position leads him to impiously ignore the laws of the gods and wrongly order the death of Antigone. His orders are carried out not because they are just but because his subjects fear him as is implied by the chorus (*Soph. Ant.* 211-220), and by Haemon (*Soph. Ant.* 689-700). See Harris (2006) 61-80.

<sup>315</sup> A theory had been developed that tyranny was, at some stage in the Archaic period, acceptable or popular in the Greek *poleis*. This theory is closely related to the idea of the tyrant as the leader of the *demos* against the Archaic 'aristocracy'. The ultimate flaw in this theory has been pointed out by Luraghi (2014) 68: 'For a start, one point must be made explicit. If we look at the handful of passages from Archaic poets that supposedly display a positive attitude to tyranny, we immediately notice that they all have a point in common. No Archaic poet ever says that he – or she, for that matter – lusts after tyranny. Without exception, the desirability of tyranny is evoked only in order to be immediately rejected, or transferred to some hypothetical other.'

attribute to the Archaic period the social, political and legal concerns of their own times, such as a tension between rich and poor and the call for a redistribution of land. The moral stereotypes of tyranny generally revolve around forms of excess including sexual deviancy, greed, bloodthirstiness, paranoia and arbitrary decisions. Andrewes, for example, writing on the tyrant Periander discussed the problems inherent in Aristotle's account of the tyranny. 'But the conventional view finds sinister motives everywhere and repeats the same charges monotonously against each tyrant, so that it is hard to be sure what we may believe of Periander, or how to interpret what we do believe.'<sup>316</sup> This insightful comment highlights the potential oral deformation of the surviving source material. The anecdotes and accounts of early tyrants may well have undergone changes as they conformed to new audience expectations or were subjected to improvisation by tellers.<sup>317</sup> For example, the rather positive tales that predicted a tyrant's future success through oracles could easily be interpreted as an originally positive folk-tale or piece of ancient propaganda that experienced changes as Greek society grew to fear and hate tyranny. Another example would be the possible desire of some Athenian families to distance themselves from charges of collaboration with the Pisistratid tyranny, noted later in this chapter, which has long been suspected to have influenced the accounts of Herodotus and Thucydides. A further problem is posed by the fact that the study of the Archaic period means using dozens of separate anecdotes, tales and oracular predictions rather than drawing on one or two larger sources, such as the Homeric poems. This renders the method of identifying formulas or patterns in a text to assure oneself of a sole author or time period for its composition much less useful.

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<sup>316</sup> Andrewes (1956) 51.

<sup>317</sup> Finnegan (1977) 54-55.

These problems can, to some extent, be mitigated by adhering to the evidence-based methodology of this thesis. This chapter will therefore gather evidence from a number of different sources that surely represent a myriad of traditions yet, as we shall see, present a very consistent picture of how Archaic tyrants took power. As stated by Drews, when approaching the Archaic tyrants it is far more profitable to ask ‘how’ they came to power rather than ‘why’.<sup>318</sup> Consequently this chapter will generally focus on Archaic tyranny as a phenomenon grounded in the social practices of the time, rather than attempt to follow chronologically the careers of individual tyrants or the strains of the narratives of specific authors regarding certain tyrants.<sup>319</sup> This will be done in order to better identify broad patterns of evidence and to avoid the need to fill in gaps in the earliest sources with unreliable later material or speculation.<sup>320</sup> This chapter will also point out the links between the practices of the Archaic period and those that are depicted in Homer and Hesiod to show the level of continuity that existed between these periods. The methods of gaining and maintaining power to be discussed are warfare, religious practice, marriage, friends and family, wealth, and the administration of justice.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> Drews (1972) 132.

<sup>319</sup> The benefits of this methodology are pointed out by Mitchell (2013) 48: ‘By looking at Greek rulership in the long view, and as a single phenomenon, rather than as imposing the traditional opposition between *basileis* and *tyrannoi*, it is possible to see that there are significant trends in the ways that rule was understood and expressed across the seven hundred years or so from the Early Iron Age to the dawn of the Hellenistic period’. Although Mitchell refers ambiguously to ‘rulership’ rather than tyranny, the need to discuss the phenomenon as a whole, and search for wide patterns of evidence, remains pertinent.

<sup>320</sup> Lavelle (1993b) 9, regarding the Pisistratids, points out the most severe problems when trying to use the source material to construct a ‘continuous or comprehensive narrative’. Lavelle singles out the fragmentary evidence, large chronological gaps between Pisistratid rule and the dates of the written sources and the hostility of the sources to Pisistratus and his family. Although Lavelle is writing specifically on the Pisistratids, all of these problems could be applied to the sources on any other Archaic tyrant.

<sup>321</sup> Mitchell (2013) 57, though broadly speaking correct, does not quite acknowledge the great breadth of methods used by Homeric *basileis* and tyrants to gain and maintain power: ‘The ruler must either rule through some kind of coercion (whether with the support of a co-opted elite or through military),

## I

### *a) Warfare*

One of the earliest surviving uses of the word *turannia* is found in a metaphor of Archilochus in which the poet states that a city has been taken by force and is now ruled as a tyranny (Archil. 23.19-21 [West]). A fragment of Theognis asks Zeus to destroy the family of Cypselus after lamenting the destruction of Cerinthus, the general destruction of vineyards and the flight of the *agathoi* (Theog. 891-894 [West]), the implication being that Cypselus was responsible for the violence and destruction. This association of tyranny with violence, military force and military leadership would persist from the Archaic period to the Roman conquest, and we shall see that Archaic tyrants are often closely linked with military leadership. Harris has noted that military commands were a popular stepping-stone for those aiming at tyranny in Archaic and Classical Greece.<sup>322</sup> Harris cites the examples of Pisistratus, who led the Athenians successfully against Megara, Solon, who captured Salamis and later wrote that he could have made himself tyrant, and the Spartan Pausanias, who held extensive military powers and was suspected of intending to make himself a tyrant.<sup>323</sup> In addition to these there are further Archaic examples. Gelon had been a cavalry officer under the tyrant Hippocrates and subsequently played a leading role in crushing a revolt against Hippocrates' sons before betraying them and becoming

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or through a process of legitimization...' . A crucial step in understanding Greek tyranny is to recognise the diverse and sometimes subtle and nuanced methods through which they took power. It is however an oversimplification to state that: 'In the context of archaic and classical Greece, legitimacy – that is, willing obedience – was achieved through proof that the ruler had an excess of *aretē*, excellence.' This acknowledges neither the diversity of methods available nor their practical benefits and implications.

<sup>322</sup> Harris (2010) 406.

<sup>323</sup> This is overlooked by Rhodes (1981) 200, in his commentary on *The Constitution of the Athenians*. Rhodes focuses instead on the methods of deception and the securing of a bodyguard as a favoured route to tyranny.



tyrant himself.<sup>324</sup> In both capacities Gelon must have wielded considerable military power. Other tyrants appear to have exercised personal control over the military once they were secure in power. For example, Herodotus states that Thrasybulus directed the war against the Lydians and organised the peace treaty and subsequent alliance with Alyattes (Hdt. 1.22). Thucydides also believed that the Pisistratids successfully prosecuted several wars on behalf of Athens (Thuc. 6.54). All of these tyrants occupied important military positions before or during their rule and appear to have lead soldiers into battle personally. As shown in Chapter I, the military power and success of the Homeric *basileus* were crucial to establishing and maintaining his position at the head of the community. Homeric *basileis* secured armed support through the distribution of wealth, through their reputation or through relationships based on practices such as marriage and guest-friendship. We shall see that Archaic tyrants continued to use these traditional methods, and military prestige, military success, the use of violence and armed supporters all continued to be used by tyrants or prospective tyrants in their pursuit of power.

Many Archaic tyrants are recorded leading military expeditions or were noted for the military prowess in the sources. Gyges is one of the earliest individuals to be called a tyrant by a surviving Greek source. According to Herodotus his descendants Ardys, Sadyattes and Alyattes led military expeditions of varying success (Hdt. 1.15-17). In the sixth century Croesus,<sup>325</sup> the son of Alyattes, continued this practice with greater success, subduing many of the Asiatic Greeks and compelling them to pay him tribute (Hdt. 1.26-27). Gelon won prestige through victory in many battles and

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<sup>324</sup> Nicolaus of Damascus wrote that Cypselus held the position of *polemarch* before he became tyrant (FGrH 90 F 57). Although this fits with the practice of using a powerful office to take power the source is very late and Hornblower (2013) 253, noting the presence of post-Archaic prejudices and assumptions, has dismissed it as ‘unusable’.

<sup>325</sup> Herodotus calls Croesus *turannos* of all the people living west of the Halys river (Hdt. 1.6).

as a military leader (Hdt. 7.154), receiving considerable acclamations for his victories over the Carthaginians (Diod. Sic. 11.21, 25). Gelon was also recorded fighting against Callipolis, Naxos, Zancle, Leontini and Syracuse on behalf of the tyrant Hippocrates. Hippocrates himself gained the town of Camarina by fighting against the Syracusans and forcing them to hand over the settlement to him (Hdt. 7.154). Hippocrates was eventually killed fighting against the native Sicels (Hdt. 7.155). Hippocrates and Gelon therefore provide examples of conquest by force of arms and a style of leadership characterised by personal participation in combat and leadership by example. By offering his military leadership to a beleaguered Thracian tribe, Miltiades son of Cypselus became a tyrant in the Chersonese (Hdt. 6.34-35), achieving his position entirely through military leadership. In the sixth century Polycrates<sup>326</sup> was well known for his military successes that brought him fame, slaves, wealth and territory (Hdt. 2.39, Thuc. 1.13). Thucydides also names the island of Rhenea as a particular conquest of Polycrates (Thuc. 3.104).<sup>327</sup> Archaic tyrants were clearly militarily active, often led their forces personally and used their military power to secure additional wealth and territory. This could be achieved through intimidation, raiding and piracy, and outright conquest. As noted in Chapter I, the Homeric *basileis* also made a point of conspicuously leading their men into battle, and profited from the plunder and slaves accumulated in successful expeditions.

Some Archaic tyrants were quick to resort to force to impose their will. Herodotus states that Cyprus was ruled by tyrants (Hdt. 5.109) and that one ruler, Onesilus, seized Salamis from his own brother with the support of his own faction

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<sup>326</sup> For the duration of the tyranny at Samos see White (1954) 36-43. Mossé (1969) 17, also suggests several theories on the date of the accession of Polycrates to the tyranny.

<sup>327</sup> On the naval power of Polycrates see Carty (2015) 128-148.

(Hdt. 5.104). Pheretima carried out brutal reprisals against the inhabitants of Barca for the murder of Arcesilaus (Hdt. 4.202-203). A number of Archaic tyrants removed their rivals through arrest, exile or deception. Miltiades son of Cimon, shortly after arriving in the territory, tricked, seized and imprisoned the most influential men in the Chersonese to consolidate his position (Hdt. 6.39).<sup>328</sup> Maeandrius of Samos supposedly did the same, luring the leading men of the island into his presence and imprisoning them (Hdt. 3.142). When Maeandrius became ill, his brother Lycaretus, expecting to become tyrant, had all the prisoners put to death, presumably to facilitate the transmission of power (Hdt. 3.143). Like Lycaretus, several Archaic tyrants simply chose to exterminate any potential rivals. Herodotus records a tradition that Gyges murdered Candaules, the previous ruler of Lydia, in order to become tyrant (Hdt. 1.11-12).<sup>329</sup> Upon becoming tyrant of Corinth Cypselus proceeded to exile or murder a significant number of Corinthians, almost certainly his opponents or potential rivals, implying that he possessed the necessary force to overpower his enemies (Hdt. 5.92b). It is implied through an anecdote in which Periander asks Thrasybulus for advice that Periander and Thrasybulus murdered all their rivals or any individuals they considered to be threats (Hdt. 5.92g). Aristotle tells the story in reverse, having Periander advise Thrasybulus to cut down the tallest ears of corn (presumably meaning the most outstanding men) (Arist. *Pol.* 3.1284a).

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<sup>328</sup> The sources regularly associate Archaic and Classical tyrants with deception and often depict them exercising a certain degree of cunning. It is not immediately clear why tyranny and deceitfulness should have been so closely associated. Yet tyrants such as Pisistratus (Hdt. 1.59, 60; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 15.4-5 ), Polycrates (Hdt. 3.59), Miltiades son of Cimon (Hdt. 6.39), and Thrasybulus of Miletus (Hdt. 1.21-22) for example, all employ deception at critical moments. Darius, who Herodotus considers to be a *monarchos*, has no qualms about employing the clever plan of his groom in order to become king of Persia (Hdt. 3.85-86). On the subject of the cunning tyrant see Luraghi (2014) 67-92. Goušchin (1999) 15-16, argues, with reference to Hdt. 1.59, for deception in the early stages of Pisistratus' career: 'I believe, however, that what Pisistratus could be 'in word' was the people's champion only, not a leader. In saying this, Herodotus is trying to convince his readers that Pisistratus was a deceiver. Firstly, he was a false *demos*-protector. Pisistratus deceived the *demos* and pretended to be the people's champion, while covertly he aimed at personal power. Herodotus was sure that the establishment of the tyranny went against the *demos*' interest. Pisistratus further deceived the Athenians when he wounded himself in order to have a bodyguard granted to him.'

<sup>329</sup> Gyges is associated with wealth and tyranny by Archilochus (Archil. 19 [West]).

Theron of Akragas was said to have exterminated his rivals, although by a much later source (Diod. Sic. 11.48). When discussing tyranny and political violence it is worth bearing in mind that, as we have seen, as early as the sixth century an association between tyranny and violence had already crystallized. By the late fifth century, Herodotus was able to articulate a more complex caricature of tyranny that went beyond a mere association with violence. Herodotus' imagery of repression and the deliberate targeting of prominent citizens appear in several anecdotes, including that of Periander and Thrasybulus, and were repeated in the fourth century. These anecdotes may represent an oral tradition or folk story, but the consistency with which they were repeated suggests that they also represent a series of Archaic and Classical Greek preconceptions of how tyrants behaved in their pursuit of power.

Pisistratus' attempt at seizing control of Athens by using armed men was not the first. Cylon had used the same tactic in the seventh century, gathering his *hetairoi* to assist him in taking the Acropolis, although unsuccessfully (Hdt. 5.72).<sup>330</sup> Fortunately the evidence of the Homeric poems provides an abundance of information on the nature of *hetairoi*. As noted in the Chapter I, *hetairoi* were close friends of an individual who fought alongside him on the battlefield and received from him presents of food, valuables and booty. *Hetairoi* in the Homeric poems are often employed as soldiers, following their leader on raids for example, and for clandestine purposes such as murder. For Cylon to have enjoyed their support he must have had access to enough wealth to maintain his relationship with this band

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<sup>330</sup> Hornblower (1991) 204, attributes the failure of Cylon's coup to the supposed lack of economic and social crises nullifying any desire for tyranny: 'It also makes good sense in terms of Athenian history: the Athenians in c.630 were not yet ready for a tyrant. During the next generation their economic and social difficulties worsened, and Solon legislated as reformer, but still not as tyrant, in 594. But Solon's solutions failed, and in the course of the sixth century a real tyrant, Pisistratus, took power.' The presence of social and economic crises in sixth century Attica that could have led to tyranny have been effectively disproven by Harris (1997; 2006, 10-14), and by the results of field survey that contradict the theory of an Attic population explosion. See Chapter II.

and the personal prowess to attract a group of loyal warriors. Cylon's use of *hetairoi* as his immediate source of military muscle during his coup fits perfectly with the Homeric uses of these individuals.<sup>331</sup>

The bands of armed followers that seem to have accompanied many tyrants are often called 'bodyguards' by translators of the sources, and are generally depicted as a feature of the tyrant's oppressive rule and a stereotypical feature of tyranny. Aristotle claimed that Theagenes of Megara asked for a bodyguard in the same manner as Pisistratus (Arist. *Rhet.* 1.2.19) and recorded a tradition that Cypselus had no bodyguard as an exception to the rule (Arist. *Pol.* 5.9.22). It is an entirely correct observation that many Archaic tyrants are recorded using bands of personal retainers, or close friends and allies as armed support. The precise identity of these soldiers is usually extremely difficult to discover, although modern scholarship often defines them as 'mercenaries'. There is no single Archaic term consistently used to describe these armed supporters and their origins and motives are often not specified by sources which are simply not interested in them. When these supporters are discussed the vocabulary applied to them is diverse. The Archaic, Classical and post-Classical sources refer to the warriors who supported Archaic tyrants as *hetairoi*, *epikouroi*, *misthophoroi*, *misthotoi*, or a number of other terms. Some of these terms are specific and merely descriptive, such as *toxotoi* (archers), or perhaps more ambiguous like several of the terms above. The Classical and post-Classical sources are generally extremely problematic when attempting to employ them as evidence for the tyrants' armed supporters. Many of the later sources were written at a time when the contracting of mercenaries was a formalised process

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<sup>331</sup> On the followers and *hetairoi* of Homeric *basileis* van Wees (2004) 95, writes: 'Leading men competed among themselves for followers, and those who agreed to serve under them did so on the basis of kinship or friendship, or as a favour, or because they were afraid to say no.' These comments would be equally relevant if applied to Archaic tyrants.

sometimes carried out by the state and when it had crystallised into a standard trope of tyranny. No Archaic source attributes bodyguards to tyrants, although the tyrants' links with military leadership are very strong. It is therefore worth investigating precisely how Archaic tyrants collected military support and what were the identities of these supporters.

Tyrants could find military allies through well-established social practices found in the Homeric poems, such as the practice of guest-friendship.<sup>332</sup> Aristagoras, a relation of Histiaeus, tyrant of Miletus, was offered the rule of Naxos by certain citizens who had been driven off the island, on the understanding that he would help them return. Their request implies that they hoped for military assistance from Aristagoras. Herodotus explains that the Naxians had gone to Miletus to request aid because Histiaeus was their *xenos* (Hdt. 5.30). The exiles must have initially expected some form of support from Histiaeus based on their *xenia* relationship. Isagoras too would have been established as tyrant of Athens through armed force, namely that of the Spartans and their allies, had the campaign succeeded. The Spartan king in command of the expedition, Cleomenes, was Isagoras' *xenos* (Hdt. 5.70, 74). For these individuals the practice of guest-friendship produced considerable military support which could play a critical role in bringing them to power. The same process of course occurs in Homer, where *xenoi* bring significant military aid to the Trojan side.

Greek tyrants are often said to have made use of mercenaries, but the exact nature and status of their armed supporters is often ambiguous. 'Mercenary' is a problematic term to apply to the soldiers of early Greek tyrants as it entails modern prejudices and assumptions and it also ignores the nuanced and variable ways tyrants

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<sup>332</sup> *Xenoi* appear as military allies in the *Iliad*, e.g.: *Il.* 13.660-661; 17.150.

and eighth-century rulers gathered military support. ‘Mercenary’ also implies that the tyrants were doing something militarily innovative, as there is no proof that mercenaries are found in Homer. In the *Iliad* the allies of the Trojans are referred to as *epikouroi* and the soldiers and allies of early tyrants are also sometimes referred to as *epikouroi*.<sup>333</sup> Interestingly, Hector explains in very clear terms how these *epikouroi* are given gifts and food despite their leaders’ existing links to the ruling family of Troy through marriage or guest-friendship.<sup>334</sup> The *epikouroi* of the *Iliad* are not mercenaries fighting purely for pay, but neither are they depicted serving Troy through a formal alliance or simple goodwill. Sarpedon for example, while calling himself an *epikouros* of Troy, was also a *xenos* and a *hetairos* of Hector.<sup>335</sup> The Trojan *epikouroi* were not allies operating without any other connection with the rulers of Troy, but were linked to the ruling family of Troy through various social practices. Likewise, we are told that Tydeus travelled to Mycenae in his capacity as a *xenos* to ask for *epikouroi* to fight with him against Thebes (*Il.* 376-379).<sup>336</sup> Homeric *epikouroi* therefore chose to fight in another’s conflict, and were not warriors driven into foreign military service by desperation or penury, or even through political

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<sup>333</sup> van Wees (2004) 71, on *epikouroi*: ‘The word *epikouroi* was used from Homer to the fifth century for various kinds of foreign soldiers brought in to help fight a war. It included both allies (*symmachoi*), i.e. troops sent publicly by another state, and private forces which did not represent a state and were called volunteers (*ethelontai*) or, if they served for an agreed wage, mercenaries (*misthophoroi*).’ Cf. Lavelle (1989) 36: ‘Invariably in Homer’s *Iliad*, the word ἐπικουρος means ‘ally’, never ‘mercenary’, and that, or more precisely, ‘fight(er) alongside (or ‘on behalf of’) must be the original sense of the root. Ἐπικουρ- came also to denote ‘fight(er) for pay’ from the time when Carian and Ionian *epikouroi* accepted Psammetichos’ promises of rewards for service with him in Egypt. The original sense of *epikour-* was nevertheless retained through the fifth century. See also Carty (2015) 149, who believes Archaic *epikouroi* to have broadly been ‘soldiers in foreign military service.’

<sup>334</sup> τὰ φρονέων δώροισι κατατρύχω καὶ ἐδωδῇ λαούς, ὑμέτερον δὲ ἐκάστου θυμὸν ἀέξω (*Il.* 17.225-226). Hektor begins the speech by calling the Trojan allies *epikouroi* (*Il.* 17.220).

<sup>335</sup> Trundle (2004) 4, unequivocally and correctly states that there are no mercenaries in Homer, and that the Homeric term *epikouros* does not mean ‘mercenary’.

<sup>336</sup> This particular instance may support the comments of van Wees (2013) 23: ‘Whether the wage was paid in kind, bullion or coin, the transaction was contractual and differed fundamentally from a ‘reciprocal’ transaction in which a service was performed voluntarily or as a favour for a beneficiary who might or might not reciprocate with a gift or counter-favour at his own discretion. In Homer and Hesiod, contractual service for a ‘wage’ was the norm for hired labour but exceptional in the public domain, where reciprocal relations prevailed, as we have seen.’

exile. Individuals of great wealth and status, such as Priam, speak freely of having once fought as an *epikouros* (*Il.* 3.188).

An *epikouros* in the *Iliad* appears to have been a warrior who fought beside or on behalf of another,<sup>337</sup> who probably had an existing relationship with his ‘ally’ characterised by a significant social practice such as guest-friendship. This *epikouros* might very well expect to be given valuable gifts and be maintained at his ally’s expense.<sup>338</sup> The eighth or seventh-century poet Archilochus writes of being called an *epikouros* ‘like a Carian’ (Archil. 216 [West]). Kaplan believes that this fragment is the earliest example of the word *epikouros* being used to mean ‘mercenary’.<sup>339</sup> In a separate fragment the poet also writes of earning his wine and bread by his spear (Archil. 2 [West]). The poet does not clarify this metaphor but, as he calls himself an *epikouros* elsewhere, it is not unreasonable to suggest Archilochus is referring to receiving sustenance through the same practice as the Trojan *epikouroi*. It is difficult to accept Kaplan’s conclusion as accurate. First because Archilochus’ comments are quite vague and therefore difficult to interpret in isolation, and second because they bear a closer resemblance, if taken literally, to the Homeric practice of service in exchange for food and drink, than any other.

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<sup>337</sup> Archilochus makes clear the point that an *epikouros* was a warrior in a short but revealing fragment. ‘Glaucus, an *epikouros* is a *philos* for just so long as he’s prepared to fight.’ (Archilochus. 15 [West, adapted]. A man’s friend might be called a *philos*, but when the *philos* fought for or with his friend he might be termed an *epikouros*).

<sup>338</sup> The origins of *epikouroi*, as indicated by Homer, are not particularly complex. They were encouraged to fight for their ally by the social practices that had established a relationship between them and the material rewards of plunder and gifts. Luraghi (2006) 22, is therefore correct to point out that the origin of Archaic Greek ‘mercenaries’, as Luraghi calls the *epikouroi*, was certainly not to be found in a ‘socio-economic crisis’. Luraghi is also correct to point out that Archaic Greek ‘mercenaries’ were not an ‘elite phenomenon’ (e.g. Niemeier (2001) 24) as there is no evidence to support the view that Homeric warriors were drawn exclusively from the elite. However, Luraghi (2006) 23, also argues that *epikouroi* had to disguise the ‘mercenary’ nature of their service by using terms such as *epikouros* and *xenos*. This is doubtful because there is no indication in Homer that *epikouroi* were shamed or socially inferior because of their service to another, and because the Homeric *epikouroi* and the poet Archilochus received gifts, not a wage like a hired labourer. The Trojan *epikouroi* are also *hetairoi*, *xenoi*, or linked to Priam’s family by marriage, grounding their alliance with him in socially acceptable and highly respected practices.

<sup>339</sup> Kaplan (2002) 233.



The *epikouroi* of the Archaic tyrants appear to have been a continuation of the Homeric practice.<sup>340</sup> We are told that Polycrates maintained a large force of hired soldiers and archers. Herodotus made a distinction between the various elements of this force, naming them as *epikouroi misthotoi* and archers (ἐπίκουροί τε μισθωτοὶ καὶ τοξόται) (Hdt. 3.45). A *misthotos* was a hired man who earned wages, implying that these soldiers were perhaps deserving of the name ‘mercenary’. Before assuming that Herodotus presents evidence for Archaic mercenaries we must acknowledge that the distinction between *epikouroi* and *misthotoi* in Herodotus is not a clear one.<sup>341</sup> When Pactyes assembled soldiers Herodotus states that he, among other things, ‘hired’ *epikouroi*, using the verb related to the noun *misthotos* (Hdt. 1.154). This is problematic because no Homeric *epikouros* receives a steady, agreed-upon wage of money. Furthermore, when Herodotus writes that Miltiades assembled five hundred *epikouroi* immediately upon arrival in the Chersonese (Hdt. 6.39), Herodotus uses the participle βόσκων, meaning literally to feed or nourish, when referring to Miltiades relationship with these soldiers. That Miltiades maintained these men at his own expense is therefore apparent and mirrors exactly Hector’s delivery of gifts and food to the Trojan *epikouroi* and Archilochus’ statement that he received bread and wine through his spear. However the exact status and background of Miltiades’ soldiers remains unclear in Herodotus. The Ionians and Carians in the

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<sup>340</sup> Trundle (2004) 5, states that: ‘The tyrants were the first Greek employers of mercenaries. They used hired men to gain power, as bodyguards and as instruments to maintain their regimes. As we shall see, the mercenary and the tyrant often went hand-in-hand in the Greek world.’ This view of the early Greek tyrant’s military power as purely ‘mercenary’ oversimplifies their methods of gaining military support. It also gives a false impression of their supporters as fighting purely for pay, rather than on the basis of connections founded on traditional social practices, as this chapter shows. Most importantly, this view does not address the continuity of these practices from Homeric to Archaic Greece. The sources that do refer to Archaic tyrant’s soldiers as mercenaries, as hired men, are late-fifth century or later.

<sup>341</sup> Carty (2015) 147, 155-165, has a more radical view of Polycrates’ *epikouroi*, positing that they may have been slaves taken in raids and compelled to fight or exported to Egypt to serve essentially as slave-soldiers. Carty’s argument is ingenious but relies heavily on certain interpretations of the sources rather than explicit evidence. Carty also does not take into account the evidence of the Trojan *epikouroi* from the *Iliad*, where the leaders of these warriors are explicitly linked to the ruling family through social practices such as marriage and guest-friendship.

service of Psammetticus of Egypt were *epikouroi*, but Psammetticus was said to have brought them into his service by making them great promises, implying that he offered them something substantial but Herodotus is not specific (Hdt. 2.152). Herodotus' picture of *epikouroi* is further confused by the fact that the term is often absent on occasions when our assumptions about civil war and factional strife might lead us to expect to encounter hired, or at least allied, military support. Arcesilaus was able to collect soldiers for his cause in Samos by offering the recruits land, effectively 'buying' their support. This tactic was successful and Arcesilaus was able to gather a large *stratos* (army) (Hdt. 4.163). Onesilus seized Salamis from his brother with the support of his *stasiotes* (Hdt. 5.104). It is extremely difficult to prove the existence of any transition between the recruiting methods of the *basileis* and those of the Archaic tyrants in Herodotus.

Herodotus, writing in the late fifth century, lived in a time when foreign soldiers could be paid monetary wages to fight in another's war, such as the *misthophoroi* who were hired by the Athenians for the campaign in Sicily and who Thucydides believed came for the sake of profit (*kerdos*) (Thuc. 7.57). Herodotus' ambiguous use of *epikouros* and *misthotos* is most likely caused by Herodotus confusing the older practice of receiving one's guest-friends and relatives as *epikouroi*, giving them appropriate gifts and feeding them, with the later fifth-century practice of hiring foreign soldiers for a wage as was certainly practised at this time. As Homeric and Archaic *epikouroi* received gifts and food from their ally, it would be not be unreasonable to suggest that later writers, such as Herodotus, might have mistaken the Homeric and Archaic practice of gift-giving and providing sustenance for the payment of a mercenary wage. Schaps has argued that Herodotus

had very limited knowledge of forms of exchange before the invention of coinage,<sup>342</sup> supporting the idea that Herodotus may have misunderstood the earlier practice.

Several scholars have attempted to link the appearance of coinage in Greece with the appearance of the first tyrants, particularly to their use of military force.<sup>343</sup> Kraay, for example, claims that Pisistratus would have needed coins in order to pay his ‘mercenaries’ from Argos and Thessaly,<sup>344</sup> although Kraay also argues for a broad date of c.575-525 for the appearance of the so-called ‘Wappenmünzen’ in Athens, a date that reaches back several decades before the rise of Pisistratus.<sup>345</sup> Subsequently Kroll and Waggoner argued against the ‘high’ dates for the earliest coins of Athens, Aegina and Corinth that were originally based on the testimony of Plutarch’s *Solon* and *The Constitution of the Athenians*.<sup>346</sup> Basing their conclusions on the archaeological evidence rather than post-Classical testimonies Kroll and Waggoner arrived at a date of c.550 for the earliest coinage of Athens.<sup>347</sup> Drews has also claimed that Archaic tyrants were rulers brought to power by hoplite *epikouroi* paid in the newly invented coins, but this idea cannot be correct. The previous chapter showed that the phalanx formation, where warriors held fixed positions, was unknown in the seventh century. Drews’ speculative remark that the hoplite *epikouroi* could now be hired with the newly invented coinage does not consider the

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<sup>342</sup> Schaps (2003) 111: ‘As we have seen in his story of Rhodopis, Herodotus was unaware that iron spits had ever been used as a medium of exchange. By the mid-fifth century and probably well before that, market trade implied coins.’

<sup>343</sup> Cook (1958) 261, suggested that the reason behind the creation of coinage in Lydia may have been to pay the Lydian king’s mercenaries who received the coins as bullion but then circulated them as money.

<sup>344</sup> Kraay (1976) 59. It is unlikely that the Argives or Thessalians who supported the Pisistratids were ‘mercenaries’. Pleket (1969) 26, also calls the Argive supporters of Pisistratus ‘mercenaries’. We are told explicitly by the sources that the Thessalians aided the Pisistratids because of a *symmachia* and that the Argives assisted out of ‘friendship’ and because Pisistratus probably had an Argive wife, the son of whom actually commanded the Argive contingent.

<sup>345</sup> Kraay (1962) 417. Wallace (1962) 417, argued for a later date ‘soon after the middle of the sixth century’.

<sup>346</sup> Plut. *Solon*. 15; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 10.

<sup>347</sup> Kroll and Waggoner (1984) 325-340.

fact that the Trojan *epikouroi* were already being given gifts of valuables and food, and seem to have been well satisfied.<sup>348</sup> Seaford has noted that there is no coinage in the Homeric poems, but in his seven characteristics of early Greek money there is no substantial discussion of the use of other forms of wealth to pay for military support in the Homeric period.<sup>349</sup> As with the Homeric period, there is no firm evidence that in Archaic Greece tyranny, military support and coined money went hand in hand. In fact the evidence from Homeric poetry suggests that the accumulation and sustenance of military support functioned perfectly well without coined money. The revolutionary nature of coinage is vulnerable to being overstated, particularly in regard to payment for military service. Kinzl, for example, suggested that the newly minted coins enabled sixth-century farmers to save a little money to buy food during bad agricultural years and that this had a stabilising effect on the society.<sup>350</sup> This kind of exchange, involving surplus precious metals, valuables or craft goods for foodstuffs, is already well attested in Homer. The Phoenicians in the *Odyssey* exchange trinkets for a large amount of *biotos* (*Od.* 15.456) and a woman is described earning a *misthos* for her children by working at the loom (*Il.* 12.433-435), presumably exchanging her products for the means of living. Odysseus, in disguise, claimed that he collected enough *ktemata* (goods or possessions) to feed his successors for ten generations, so large was the amount of *keimelia* collected (*Od.* 19.293-295). Again we see that other forms of wealth, including treasure items (*keimelia*), could be exchanged for the essentials of life. Giving the phenomenon of early Greek coinage any substantial role in the rise of seventh and sixth-century

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<sup>348</sup> Drews (1972) 142-144.

<sup>349</sup> Seaford (2004) 16-19.

<sup>350</sup> Kinzl (1979) 313: 'Ferner darf wohl angenommen werden, daß die nun beginnende Verbreitung der ersten Silbermünzen (der sogenannten Wappenmünzen) eine stabilisierende Wirkung ausübte: wenn die standing am Rand des Ruins stehenden Kleinstbauern nun in einem guten Erntejahr ein paar solcher Silberstücke erwerben konnten, würden sie in einem schlechten Jahr diese gegen das zum bloßen Überleben Nötige eintauschen können.'

Greek tyrants is simply unnecessary and stretches the available evidence beyond any tolerable limits.

In a more recent work Schaps is sceptical that coinage was created in Greece to pay hired soldiers, but still speculates that the force assembled by Pisistratus for his third coup may have included many ‘mercenaries’.<sup>351</sup> As we have seen, it is unlikely that the bands of warriors who supported *basileis* and tyrants were true mercenaries. Furthermore, we should not begin with the assumption that Archaic warriors were necessarily paid in coined money. The terms *misthotoi* and *misthophoroi* have often been taken to mean that these men received a wage of coined money. However, in the *Iliad*, where no coins are present whatsoever, a woman labours at her weaving to provide a *misthos* for her children (*Il.* 12.433-435), and Apollo and Poseidon work for Laomedon for a *misthos* (*Il.* 21.441-457). Interestingly Hector offers the chariots and horses of Achilles to the man who reconnoitres the Achaian camp. Hector calls this a ‘great gift’ and a *misthos* (*Il.* 10.303-312). Hector offers the *misthos* in return for a favour, in this case the collecting of intelligence, and the *misthos* takes the form of a very expensive and highly prestigious gift. There is no hint whatsoever that Hector is doing anything other than honouring a useful friend with a gift according to the norms of reciprocity and largesse. Dolon merely asks that Hector swear to Zeus that he will stand by his promise to give him the horses and chariot, never implying that he is in any way a ‘mercenary’ or that he is upset at being associated with the term *misthos*.

The evidence above suggests that it is unnecessary to create a sudden and absolute transition from the Homeric practice of supplying soldiers in return for gifts and favours to the later practice of contracting mercenaries for a wage, particularly a

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<sup>351</sup> Schaps (2003) 97-98, 125.

wage of coins, at least not in the Archaic period. The support of Homeric *epikouroi* was not secured through an agreed-upon wage of coins. Instead the relationship between *epikouroi* and their allies was based on the ties created by various social practices. The *epikouroi* of Homer simply did not need to be paid a wage of coins as gifts of food and valuables, often including a share of the booty, appear to have been perfectly acceptable recompense for their services. In Homeric and Archaic Greece coinage was not necessary to secure military support although in Classical and post-Classical times it may, as with any transaction, have helped to facilitate it.

Although many of the *epikouroi* cited above were rewarded with something, referring to them simply as mercenaries ignores the contexts in which the term *epikouros* appears and the many social practices already binding the various parties together.<sup>352</sup> Considering that the *epikouroi* of the eighth-century were allies partially secured through standard practices like guest friendship and marriage, yet still received gifts of valuables and could be maintained at their host's expense, it is probably unnecessary to create a sharp definition between 'ally' and 'mercenary' when investigating the Archaic *epikouroi* in the service of tyrants. In fact the evidence actively discourages it. As noted by Singor, 'As for the *epikouroi*, its meaning is ambiguous, for even "allies" must often be fed and maintained by those in whose service they appear.'<sup>353</sup> The use of armed supporters continued to be a significant tool for tyrants or those aiming at tyranny, with military support largely found through traditional practices and personal relationships. There is little or no evidence in the Archaic sources for purely mercenary support, nor is there evidence

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<sup>352</sup> This is noted by van Wees (2004) 72: 'Some of the leaders of *epikouroi* are certainly native rulers and might be acting in a public capacity, but at the same time they are serving as personal guest-friends (*xenoi*) of Trojan princes (13.660-1;17.150), just as most of the mercenary commanders who led the Ten Thousand under Cyrus served him because they were his guest-friends.'

<sup>353</sup> Singor (2000) 113.

for hoplite or other class-based forms of military support for tyrants. By accumulating followers and allies, military prestige, and killing rivals and opponents the Archaic tyrants did not depart from the practices of the previous centuries presented in the Homeric poems.

#### *b) Religious practice*

Many Archaic tyrants were remembered for actively engaging with religious practices,<sup>354</sup> with Delphi and Olympia being particular recipients of luxurious offerings. Miccythus, left as ruler of Rhegium by the tyrant Anaxilaus, dedicated statues at Delphi (Hdt. 7.170-171).<sup>355</sup> Polykrates dedicated the entire island of Rhenea to Apollo (Hdt. 1.13) and built temples (Arist. *Pol.* 5.1313b). Gyges was remembered for the gold and silver offerings he sent to Delphi (Hdt. 1.14). Cypselus built a treasury at Delphi, later rededicated as the treasury of the Corinthians (Hdt. 1.14, Plut. *De Pyth.* 13). One of the members of the powerful Orthagorid family,<sup>356</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Descent from gods and heroes has been claimed, in very general terms, to be a method of legitimising the rule of tyrants. For example Mitchell (2013) 58: 'Proof of heroism was possible by proving descent from gods or heroes.' Mitchell states that proving one's heroism showed that one 'had a right to rule.' What this means in practical terms is not entirely clear. What were the tangible benefits of claiming descent from a god or hero? If this phenomenon is to be cited as a method by which *basileis* and tyrants took power then explicit examples of leaders gaining armed supporters, collecting wealth and encouraging popular support specifically through heroic or divine descent are necessary.

<sup>355</sup> The lack of sections on tyrants and their interactions with sanctuaries in studies on Greek religion is curious, especially given the extraordinary scale of their offerings. Pedley (2005) and de Polignac's (1995) works on sanctuaries and Greek religion contain no chapters or subsections on tyrants. This is partly because the links between tyrants and religious legitimacy are generally interpreted cynically as pure propaganda rather than as sincere participation with contemporary religious customs. This is the view adopted by Morgan (1990) 5: 'At least for the purposes of assessing sanctuary investment, however, tyrants are better regarded as representatives of a particular experiment in state ordering rather than as leading individuals, since their actions in promoting civic building schemes reveal a close practical identification with the poleis they ruled, whatever their underlying personal motives.' The problem with this interpretation is that it overlooks the practical need of tyrants, and of Homeric *basileis*, to ensure the safety and prosperity of their community through giving appropriate gifts to the gods.

<sup>356</sup> The precise dating and genealogy of the Orthagorid family is almost impossible to discern due to incomplete and contradictory sources. Attempts to make sense of them and apply some form of

whose most famous representative is Cleisthenes the tyrant of Sicyon, may have built a treasury at Olympia. The dedicator is named Myron and called a tyrant by Pausanias although it is unclear if this was a seventh-century individual or a later member of the family (Paus. 6.19.1-2).<sup>357</sup> The expensive dedications of Cypselus at Delphi and Olympia are also mentioned by the philosophers (Arist. *Pol.* 5.1313b; Pl. *Phdr.* 236.b) and by a number of later writers (Plut. *De Pyth.* 13; Agaklytos *FGrH* 411F1; Strab. 8.20; Paus. 5.2.3). Aristotle wrote that Cypselus imposed a tithe on the property of the Corinthians amounting to a tenth part taken on an annual basis. He then dedicated this wealth to Zeus to fulfil an oath he had made ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1346a-1346b). Although the anecdote told by Aristotle about Cypselus' tithe is bizarre and almost certainly apocryphal, a community-wide collection of goods initiated by the ruler for the purposes of sacrifice is attested in Homer (*Od.* 3.4-8) and also in Herodotus (Hdt. 1.50).

Pausanias claims to have seen a horn dedicated by Miltiades son of Cimon, the first of his family to be tyrant in the Chersonese (Paus. 6.19). Theagenes of Megara was, in later times, believed to have built the altar to Achelous in the city (Paus. 1.41). Alyattes, a descendent of Gyges and ruler of Lydia, built temples to Athena (Hdt. 1.22) and made a gift of a silver bowl to the sanctuary at Delphi (Hdt. 1.25).<sup>358</sup> Herodotus wrote that Croesus made huge sacrifices of animals and objects to the gods, as well as compelling every Lydian to offer sacrifice (Hdt. 1.50). Croesus' dedications at Delphi included gold and silver, women's ornaments and clothing, and weapons (Hdt. 1.51-2, 54, 92). Herodotus writes that Maeandrius, who

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workable chronology to the family have been made by Hammond (1956) 45-53, White (1958) 2-14, and Leahy (1968) 1-23.

<sup>357</sup> On this problem note the comments of Leahy (1968) 6.

<sup>358</sup> Herodotus wrote that Gyges' family usurped the tyranny from the Heraclids and that Gyges ruled as a tyrant (Hdt. 1.14).



became tyrant of Samos after the murder of Polycrates, dedicated Polycrates' furniture in the temple of Hera (Hdt. 3.123). As well as advertising the giver's piety to the community and visitors to the temple or sanctuary, the dedicating of objects was done to elicit a reciprocal response from the god, as well as to give thanks or fulfil an oath.<sup>359</sup> Although these dedications won praise and helped establish legitimacy within the tyrant's own *polis*, the fact that so many were prominently displayed at Olympia and Delphi suggests that the tyrants were also interested in winning praise and establishing legitimacy abroad.

In addition to being enthusiastic patrons of sanctuaries tyrants actively engaged with religious ritual. Pheidon of Argos may have seized control of the contests at Olympia, overseeing them in place of the Eleans (Hdt. 6.127).<sup>360</sup> Grinnus, the *basileus* of Thera, travelled to Delphi to sacrifice victims on behalf of his *polis* (Hdt. 4.150). Like the Homeric *basileis* Grinnus is seen conspicuously sacrificing for his community. Although he is not called a tyrant by Herodotus he is clearly the ruler of the community, taking charge of religious affairs and possessing the authority to organise and command an expedition of settlers. By building temples and other dedications to the gods tyrants continued the practices of the Homeric *basileis*. By using their wealth and power to ensure that the community enjoyed the favour of the gods through their offerings they offered a unique service to their people. Several rulers, Grinnus of Thera and the Pisistratids (see below) are also mentioned offering sacrifice specifically on behalf of their community, giving these rulers an opportunity to distribute wealth and honour the gods. Shapiro has stated

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<sup>359</sup> Pedley (2005) 80.

<sup>360</sup> Pheidon is called a tyrant by Herodotus but, as noted by Kinzl (1979) 299: 'Herodots Bemerkungen sollten auch nicht dahingehend ausgedeutet werden, daß Pheidon wegen des olympischen Zwischenfalles als Tyrann zu betrachten sei.' Kinzl is correct to state that there are no grounds for suggesting that Pheidon's supposed seizure of the games was the specific grounds for Herodotus calling him a tyrant. Interference in the traditional rites is not listed in Herodotus' clearest and most comprehensive description of tyranny (Hdt. 3.80).

that 'The reason why temples were the medium through which tyrants advertised their wealth and power is obvious and has nothing to do with piety.'<sup>361</sup> While Shapiro is probably correct to point out that religious practice, particularly temple building, certainly showed a tyrant's wealth and power, this view presents a picture of Archaic Greece where rulers cynically exploit the piety of their apparently docile people entirely for quick political profit and expediency. This view does not fit at all with Homeric and Hesiodic concerns over maintaining the favour of the gods (*Il.* 16.386-388, *Od.* 18.483-487; Hes. *Op.* 130-139). These poems clearly present the importance of propitiating the gods with gifts and observing customary rituals. This is done in order that the community would be safe and prosperous through receiving the gods' favour. Conversely denying the gods their gifts and failing to practice and uphold accepted religious norms brought down the anger of the gods upon the entire community. The god's punishment could take the form, among other things, of failing crops, disease or barren women. Temples were therefore as necessary for the community as the houses and walls of the city, as shown by Nausithoos who built the temples on Phaiakia as a matter of course upon founding the settlement (*Od.* 7.10). By using their wealth and influence to build temples the tyrants performed an important and lasting service to the community by encouraging its prosperity and averting the anger of the gods. Herodotus describes the Lydian Alyattes, a member of the Mermnadae who had usurped the tyranny from the Heraclids, building two temples to Athena at Assesus. He did this because his health was failing after

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<sup>361</sup> Shapiro (1989) 6. Burkert (1996) 24-25, gives a more nuanced approach to tyrants' temple building: 'It is easy to see that in this context temple-building is primarily a demonstration of prestige, of wealth and power in the form of thanksgiving to the gods. The temple is the most prestigious and costly *anathema*. As the rulers expect the others to bow to them, they bow to the gods themselves and are thus exonerated from the resentments which may come from below.' This is still perhaps not quite satisfactory, the citizens of the early *poleis*, as shown by the second chapter, were not serfs or feudal bondsmen who were particularly subservient to their leaders. This view also passes over the practical need of the *basileis* and the tyrants to secure the favour of the gods and consequently protect their community.

accidentally burning down the original temple of Athena. It is implied that by building two new temples Alyattes appeased the anger of the goddess (Hdt. 1.19-22). This instance recalls the crew of Odysseus offering a temple to Helios to make amends for offending him by slaughtering his cattle (*Od.* 12.345). For rulers so obviously concerned with maintaining popular support, the observance of religious custom would have played a key role in maintaining the popularity of a tyrant and in justifying the tyrant's position at the head of the community. If the tyrant could provide the largest and most impressive sacrifices in a highly conspicuous manner this could only have increased his legitimacy by linking his rule with the continued prosperity of his subjects.<sup>362</sup>

It is remarkable how many Archaic rulers received oracular predictions of their rule or at least attracted traditions of (often favourable or at least ambiguous) prophecies during or after their lifetimes. One scholar has commented that 'We should not see in the oracles or portents recorded by Herodotus...anything more than the reflection of popular interest in oracles and superstition.'<sup>363</sup> Despite the high probability that many of the oracles recorded by Herodotus represent an oral tradition they should not be ignored when studying early tyranny. It is, of course, not possible to prove that the oracles represent a historical record, as opposed to an oral tradition formed over time. Some bear the hallmarks of folk-stories, containing moral warnings, coincidental meetings and predetermined outcomes. It is, however, worth noting that the oracles in the Homeric poems perform specific functions, often giving direction to the community, legitimacy to rulers and boosting communal morale. Divinely inspired predictions appear in the Homeric poems and contributed

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<sup>362</sup> See McGregor (1941) for a discussion on the involvement of Cleisthenes with religious festivals and games.

<sup>363</sup> Waters (1971) 9.

directly to the legitimacy of certain *basileis*. Telemachus, for example, is told explicitly that his family will rule Ithaka forever by Theoclymenus (*Od.* 15.531-534). Agamemnon is also told in a dream that the gods have granted that he will conquer Troy. Although Zeus is deceiving him Agamemnon does not doubt the divine message (*Il.* 2.1-34). Both prophecies confirm the actions of their subjects and, explicitly in the case of Agamemnon, legitimise violence against their enemies. If such practices occurred and had meaning in the late eighth century, there is no reason to believe they were not practised or lacked meaning in the seventh or the sixth century for the same reasons. While the accounts of oracles may not represent an accurate historical record of rituals or events, it is probable that they represent a long-standing tradition of oracular pronouncements, given the societal function performed by the oracles in the Homeric poems, and the political function of the oracles for the later tyrants. Marking the oracles of Herodotus, or other sources, as totally fictional and historically useless also ignores the obviously positive relationship between many tyrants and sanctuaries such as Delphi. This relationship is best evidenced by the literary and archaeological record of the tyrants' many offerings. Finally, when we investigate the relationship of tyrants to oracles a broad pattern of evidence emerges which is difficult to dismiss. Far too many tyrants are associated with oracles for these prophecies to be an elaborate fabrication. If the surviving accounts of oracles from Homer to the fourth century were mere poetic or literary tropes, this would have required a faithful reproduction of these tropes over a period of at least four hundred years in order to produce the body of oracles which have survived. Furthermore, the use of oracles to secure divine sanction and guidance for state actions has been well established by several scholars, particularly

Neer.<sup>364</sup> This is not to say that the personages and events contained in stories of oracles should always be accepted as historical. As with oral poetry, folklore rarely records events accurately, but still acts as a repository of practises understood by contemporary audiences. Dismissing tyrannical associations with oracles as folklore also requires us to assume that tyrants did not wish to make use of this obviously effective tool that not only provided legitimacy but genuinely assisted the community by revealing the gods' will.

Cylon attempted his coup after receiving an oracle promising him the tyranny of Athens provided he performed the correct actions at the correct time. Cylon, however, misinterpreted the oracle, instigated his coup at the wrong time and the attempt failed (Hdt. 5.71; Thuc. 1.126; Plut. *Solon*. 12).<sup>365</sup> The Heraclid tyrants of Lydia had their power confirmed by an oracle (Hdt. 1.7),<sup>366</sup> as did Gyges when he came to power (Hdt. 1.13). One of the most interesting examples is that of Cypselus of Corinth. His rule of Corinth was prophesied by the oracle at Delphi and has attracted a great deal of scholarly debate (Hdt. 5.92b, 92e).<sup>367</sup> There are three oracular pronouncements in Herodotus concerning Cypselus and although there is no general agreement about the date or historicity of the Cypselid oracles they do fit

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<sup>364</sup> E.g. Neer (2007) 227: 'States would appeal to the oracle in moments of internal crisis, typically asking yes-or-no questions on matters of policy. The god's response would legitimize one or another course of action, thereby paving the way for consensus.'

<sup>365</sup> Both Herodotus and Thucydides' accounts report that Cylon was an Olympic victor and set out with the intention of making himself tyrant. It is Herodotus' account that specifically mentions Cylon's *hetairoi*. Thucydides states in more vague terms that Cylon was assisted by his *philoï*. Note, however, the assistance Deioces received from his *philoï* in becoming tyrant. Plutarch's much later account makes no mention of the Olympic victory or provides any details on the identity of Cylon's supporters (Plut. *Solon*. 12).

<sup>366</sup> Herodotus calls their rule a tyranny (Hdt. 1.14).

<sup>367</sup> E.g. den Boer (1957) 339; Oost (1972) 16-18; Parker (2007) 18. For an analysis of some of the main theories regarding the date and function of the Cypselid oracles see McGlew (1993) 61-74. See also Morgan (1990) 178-182. Andrewes (1956) 48, who generally believed in their historicity, made an attempt to use the content of the oracles to date them either before or after the reign of Cypselus: 'The second of the oracles quoted above is hostile to Cypselus and seems to be a product, though not a specially highly coloured one, of Delphi's later attitude, when the oracle was concerned to maintain that it had always both foreseen and disapproved. The others must be earlier, and must rank as the earliest literary documents that we have for Cypselus.' Cf Fontenrose (1978) 116-117.

into the broader association of Homeric and Archaic rulers with oracles.<sup>368</sup> Furthermore they confirmed Cypselus in his position and predicted the destruction of his enemies just like the oracles given to Agamemnon and Telemachus in the Homeric poems. Battus of Cyrene also received the approval of the oracle at Delphi that confirmed him and his family in their power (Hdt. 4.155). His descendant Arcesilaus also had his power reaffirmed by the oracle at Delphi (Hdt. 4.163). Miltiades received oracular support for his leadership of the Dolonci while still living under the rule of the Pisistratids (Hdt. 6.34). With so many Archaic tyrants receiving favourable oracles it is clear that the approval of the gods was actively sought by these men and for a significant reason.

For an explanation of this phenomenon we must turn to the society that predates the tyrants. Much of the scholarship that discusses the Cypselid oracles, for example, does not discuss the Homeric use of *manteis* and of prophecy to lend religious legitimacy to the ruler's position and behaviour. The prophecies given to Homeric *basileis* confirmed their families in positions of power and legitimised violence against their enemies. The oracles, *manteis* or messages contained in dreams or in other mundane circumstances revealed the gods' will or gave warnings to avoid impending disasters. Possessing this knowledge confirmed the actions and statuses of rulers (*Il.* 2.300-332) or future rulers such as Telemachus (*Od.* 15.531-534). As we have seen, many of the prophetic statements made regarding Archaic tyrants do precisely the same. The fact that Homeric poetry depicts tangible benefits in engaging with oracles and prophecies for Homeric rulers should help question a move to dismiss the Archaic oracles regarding tyrants as pure propaganda or pure fiction. When the significance of oracles as a means to gain popular support for

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<sup>368</sup> Pleket (1969) 24, like most commentators, believes that the oracles associated with Cypselus were created '*post eventum*', presumably to please the newly influential followers of Cypselus.

tyrants has been acknowledged by scholars they have generally viewed it as an attempt by a usurper and illegal ruler to excuse his dominant position in the *polis*. One scholar has taken this view in acknowledging the practical value of oracles to tyrants, stating that ‘Tyrannical power was, by definition, extra-legal, yet tyrants commonly attempted to enhance their popularity by presenting their rule as a desirable departure from the previous order; if they did consult Delphi, they may therefore have sought deliberately to present the responses as different and special also.’<sup>369</sup> This view perhaps misses the key issue of continuity between the practices of the Homeric *basileis* and the Archaic tyrants. The rule of an Archaic tyrant was neither innovative, as it’s form was several centuries old, nor a departure from another form of rule but that of the rule of law.

### c) *Wealth*

There are no census records for Archaic Greece, no tax receipts or assessments that can reveal precisely how wealthy tyrants and their families were or from what sources they created wealth. However, archaeological and literary evidence suggests many Archaic tyrants or potential tyrants were very wealthy individuals. Personal wealth was after all required to employ many of the methods required to gain and maintain power, such as collecting soldiers, establishing friendships with other powerful men and arranging marriage alliances.<sup>370</sup> It was also needed for less obvious methods of constructing power such as hosting games, distributing largesse,

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<sup>369</sup> Morgan (1990) 181.

<sup>370</sup> As noted, for example, by Kinzl (1979) 308: 308. ‘In der Person des Kleisthenes erkennen wir den Archetypus des hocharchaischen Adelsherren wieder, sein politisches Gewicht durch ererbten Grund und Boden samt den darauf wirtschaftenden Kleinbauern bestimmt, hierdurch wiederum in die Lage versetzt, als eine führende Gestalt im politischen, kulturellen und militärischen Bereich aufzutreten...’. Kinzl was absolutely correct in indicating the relationship between privately owned wealth and the ability to become a political and military force in the Archaic community.

building temples, offering sacrifice and providing expensive offerings for sanctuaries. Many tyrants also attracted striking anecdotes that revolved around the extent of their personal wealth or their avarice, suggesting a popular association of tyranny with riches.

Gyges and Croesus were proverbially wealthy tyrants, giving away expensive gifts and generating anecdotes focused on their fantastic wealth (Hdt. 1.14, 6.125). Cylon and Miltiades the son of Cypselus were both Olympic victors (Hdt. 5.71, 6.35, 39), suggesting they were wealthy individuals with the means to patronise the games. Cleisthenes of Sicyon is associated with extensive consumption of wealth in the form of food and drink consumed at feasts and items of treasure given away as gifts (Hdt. 6.129-130). Cleisthenes of Sicyon was also believed to have won a chariot race by several later sources (Pausanias. 7.6-7; Diod. Sic. 8.19). Miltiades was able to afford to maintain five hundred men once he had established himself securely in the Chersonese (Hdt. 6.39). Herodotus wrote that Cypselus had seized the property of his enemies upon coming to power (Hdt. 5.92e). Cypselus of Corinth may have also levied a tithe on the populace ([Arist.] *Oec.* 22.1). Archilochus famously associated great wealth with tyranny (Archil. 19 [West]), as does the poetry of Solon (Solon. 33 [West]). Tyrants could also gain large amounts of booty through their position as military leaders, often investing the profits in acts of generosity or sacred dedications.<sup>371</sup> In order to become a tyrant private wealth was clearly necessary to engage in the various practices and methods that increased the individual's power. Being a tyrant also seems to have led to an increase in private wealth, with Polycrates, Maeandrius and Gelon all becoming very wealthy, or

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<sup>371</sup> As noted by Burkert (1996) 25: 'Gods legitimate war, with its rapid changes of wealth, and the outcome is temple-building. Successful wars would most easily bring the necessary amount of riches at a stroke, the surplus to be transformed into a lasting monument.'



notably wealthier, *after* becoming tyrant, suggesting a correlation between one's position as tyrant and one's ability to accumulate wealth. As the interests of ancient authors lay elsewhere, precisely how this happened is generally not clear, although a theory will be suggested in the section about the administration of justice below.

*d) Friends and family*

Hornblower has called Thucydides' statement that Minos appointed his sons to govern the islands of the Cyclades an anachronism, stating that it is 'borrowed from the age of tyrants'.<sup>372</sup> While there is no single 'age of tyrants' the comparison between the legendary Minos' use of his sons as rulers and the behaviour of the Greek tyrants is apt. Archaic tyrants were certainly quick to call upon the services of friends and family in time of need. They employed them as councillors, supporters, soldiers, public figures and political agents. If they had the power they could also set them up as rulers in their own right, extending this favour to friends and allies as well as relatives. Using friends and family in the context of gaining and maintaining power was not an innovative action in the Archaic period. The *basileis* depicted in Homer had already been making extensive use of relations and guest friends as a matter of course, turning to their relations for assistance, even as military muscle or assassins, sometimes employing them in perilous circumstances. Polycrates initially divided the rule of Samos between himself and his two brothers (Hdt. 3.39), but also attempted to build useful relationships with individuals beyond his immediate family, exchanging presents with Amasis of Egypt (Hdt. 2.182).<sup>373</sup> A positive

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<sup>372</sup> Hornblower (1991) 21.

<sup>373</sup> On the family of Polycrates see the comments of Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella (2007) 438-439.

relationship between Periander and the kingdom of Lydia may also have existed.<sup>374</sup> Periander supposedly sent three hundred boys, presumably enslaved individuals, to Alyattes to be castrated (Hdt. 3.48), and at least some of the dedications of the Lydian kings at Delphi were placed in the treasury of Cypselus, later the treasury of the Corinthians (Hdt. 1.14). Histiaeus of Miletus had also maintained guest-friendships with an unspecified number of the leading men of Naxos (Hdt. 5.30). Herodotus explicitly states that Terillus of Himera received armed support from the Carthaginians because of his guest-friendship with their king (Hdt. 7.165). After resolving their war, Thrasybulus and Alyattes made a point of becoming *xenoi* (Hdt. 1.22). In Herodotus' tale of the rise of Deioces at the meeting of the Medes Herodotus suggests that it was the 'friends' (*philoï*) of Deioces who dominated the meeting, and by extension had a hand in the suggestion that the Medes create a monarch. Herodotus clearly expected that a man's *philoï* would have a role in elevating him to power (Hdt. 1.97-98). This is seen most clearly when Cylon's *hetairoi* assist him in his coup. Although we hear next to nothing of support from Cylon's immediate family, Thucydides implies that Cylon was supported in person by his brother who later escaped with him from the Acropolis (Thuc. 1.126). As well as using friends and supporters as allies, a number of Archaic tyrants were placed in their positions by a more powerful friend or relative. Some Ionian tyrants were supported by the Persian king or his satraps (Hdt. 4.137-138; 5.11, 23; 5.94; 7.156), while others, such as Lygdamis of Naxos, were given places to rule by another friendly tyrant (Hdt. 1.64). Herodotus writes that Theomestor was rewarded with the tyranny of Samos for his military service to the king of Persia (Hdt. 8.85). Before he was murdered, Lycophron was given the rule of Corinth by his father Periander, who

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<sup>374</sup> The possibility of a relationship between Periander and Alyattes is suggested by Andrewes (1956) 51.

would in turn have transferred himself to and ruled Corcyra (Hdt. 3.53). The careful use of friends, family and established contacts as agents and subordinates helped protect the ruler's position by granting authority or important tasks to individuals whose loyalty was fairly secure.

*e) Marriage*

Many significant marriages are mentioned by the sources in relation to Archaic tyranny. As Dreher notes, regarding tyrants' wives and female relatives the sources only mention some of the women immediately associated with significant tyrants, saying little or nothing about the rest.<sup>375</sup> Despite the scarcity of evidence there are important social and political factors involved in tyrant marriages. Before c.650 a favourable marriage in Homeric Greece could lead to upward social mobility, large transfers of wealth, military support and an increase in personal prestige and status. We will see that these marriages continued to bring all of these benefits, including significant military assistance at times of peril, for the tyrants concerned.<sup>376</sup> Although Herodotus was uncertain as to the truth of the story, he noted that Pausanias of Sparta was betrothed to the daughter of Megabates, a cousin of Darius, because Pausanias had a desire to become tyrant of Greece (Hdt. 5.32). Herodotus might have doubted the story, but marriage as a stepping stone to power and eventually tyranny was not, as shall be shown, an unusual occurrence. A number of

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<sup>375</sup> Dreher (2007) 239.

<sup>376</sup> Many tyrants married into the families of other tyrants, however it is unlikely that tyrant families consciously tried to restrict marriage to other tyrants, as has been claimed by Hornblower (2013) 252. As noted by Anderson (2005) 192: 'they [the tyrants] were playing the same game...as everyone else. There was no shadowy confederacy of dictators'. Marriages among the elite involving exchanges of wealth are found in Homer and a number of influential archaic Greeks married into the families of tyrants without ever aiming at tyranny themselves. For example the Alcmaeonidae won prestige through a marriage to Agarista, daughter of Cleisthenes, tyrant of Sicyon (Hdt. 6.126). Pisistratus may have had as many as three wives, none of whom were the daughters of tyrants.

marriages between tyrant families and other powerful families or rulers are mentioned in passing by the sources. An Egyptian Pharaoh might have married one of the daughters of the Battiad family of Cyrene (Hdt. 2.181). Cleisthenes of Sicyon married his daughter to Megacles son of Alcmaeon (Hdt. 6.130). This must have been a useful marriage for Cleisthenes as the Alcmaeonids were a large and wealthy family with many followers and adherents. In the sixth century they had the strength to drive out the rival Pisistratid family. Miltiades son of Cimon secured his rule of the Chersonese partly by marrying Hegesipyle, the daughter of a neighbouring Thracian king (Hdt. 6.39). Herodotus mentions this event in the context of steps taken by Miltiades to secure his rule, implying that this marriage was a conscious decision taken by Miltiades to cement that position.<sup>377</sup> Periander married the daughter of Procles the tyrant of Epidaurus (Hdt. 3.50). Anaxilaus, tyrant of Rhegium, secured aid for Terillus, tyrant of Himera, because he had married Terillus' daughter (Hdt. 7.165). The Athenian Cylon had married the daughter of Theagenes, tyrant of Megara, and had received some military aid from Theagenes during his attempt to seize control of Athens (Thuc. 1.126). The extent of military aid given to relations by marriage suggests that there was strong political or social pressure for rulers to support their relations. This translated into effective and substantial military support, as seen in the *Iliad* where relations by marriage assist each other on the battlefield and where promises of a favourable marriage are used to secure military support.

#### *f) Justice*

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<sup>377</sup> As noted by Gernet (1968, trans. 1981) 292: 'Of necessity, a marriage contracted with a foreigner was packed with military significance, even when the wife stayed in her own country...'

The concept of tyrants as lawgivers and political and legal innovators has been argued by several scholars. This view of Archaic tyranny is attractive because it appears to support the theory that presents tyrants as social revolutionaries, creating a neat evolution of Greek government from kings and aristocracies through to tyrannies, oligarchies and the ultimate goal of democracy.<sup>378</sup> It can also be easily married to theories of economic and social crises in the Archaic *polis*, with the tyrant depicted as either a product of or the solution to these crises. In reality the evidence for tyrants and the administration of justice suggests, as we shall see, a further continuation of Homeric practices.

Many anecdotes preserving sayings or stories that exhibit the tyrant's fairness or wisdom have been preserved alongside traditions that named tyrants as great legislators. However, these stories must be approached with an element of caution. The traditions of justice and fairness that are attributed to many Archaic tyrants of the seventh and sixth centuries have caused the tyrants to be described as reformers and lawgivers by several generations of scholars. These historians emphasise the novelty of the tyrant's position and claim that the tyrant represented a force for reform or revolution. This, however, is an incorrect interpretation. As has been shown tyrants were not brought to power by social or economic crises. On the contrary, tyrants appear to have engaged with the features of the rule of law as long as these features served their interests. Even Dionysius, often depicted as the most sordid of tyrants, maintained the assembly at Syracuse, putting critical decisions regarding war and peace to the vote (Diod. Sic. 14.45). What the evidence suggests is that the traditions of justice and lawgiving that surround some early tyrants actually reflect continuity, not revolution. There are recognisable and sophisticated

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<sup>378</sup> E.g. Salmon (1997) 60-63.

concepts of justice and fairness operating in Greece from the eighth century onwards. Archaic tyrants were not the first individuals to offer Greek communities justice and order in return for wealth and authority. The Homeric *basileis* were doing this well before 650. We also know that the *basileis* were able to accumulate wealth, popularity and power through the administration of justice. The tyrants did not depart from this. What really seems to have occurred is that from the seventh century the tyrants kept maintaining order and conspicuously administering justice in the same manner as the Homeric *basileis*.<sup>379</sup>

A number of traditions of justice have survived regarding Archaic tyrants.<sup>380</sup> Aristotle believed Pittacus was elected as *aisymnetes* in Mytilene to combat civil discord (Arist. *Pol.* 3.1285a) and the *Athenian Constitution* states that Pheidon of Argos introduced a system of weights ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 10.2). Herodotus reported that Cleisthenes personally altered the tribal system of Sicyon (Hdt. 5.67). In later times Pittacus, Periander and Pisistratus were named among the Seven Sages of Greece (Plat. *Prot.* 342a; Diog. Laert. 1.13). Carty has argued that Polycrates' father, and perhaps Polycrates himself, held key magistracies before Polycrates became tyrant.<sup>381</sup> In the fourth century Cleisthenes of Sicyon was remembered by some as having cared for the interests of his people and of being moderate and for scrupulously observing the laws (Arist. *Pol.* 5.1315b). Herodotus links the popularity

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<sup>379</sup> As noted in the previous chapters, there are accepted norms regarding property depicted in Homer and Hesiod. There are also norms regarding fairness and justice. The best example of this comes during the funeral games for Patroklos in Book 23 of the *Iliad*. Achilles' resolves disputes in front of the Achaians and Menelaos gives a speech which explains that winning an athletic contest by deception or force is wrong (*Il.* 23.576-578). A concept of justice and fair play is clearly evident in these passages. Interestingly Achilles very conspicuously judges the contestants, resolves disputes and tries to conform to the collective will of the assembled Achaians. In doing so he gains the support of the Achaians who openly approve of how he behaves (*Il.* 488-498, 536-541, 551-552, 822-825). Popularity and the approval of the community was a by-product of conspicuously appearing just and fair.

<sup>380</sup> Even in the late fifth century Herodotus has Darius explain in the Persian constitutional debate that only a sole-ruler can put down the destructive factions harming the community, punish the wicked and ultimately bring order, thereby becoming *monarchos* (Hdt. 3.80).

<sup>381</sup> Carty (2015) 127.

of the Egyptian king Mycerinus' rule with his conspicuous fairness. Mycerinus was known to him for reintroducing the Egyptians' ancestral religious customs and for resolving disputes in a remarkably fair manner (Hdt. 2.129). Cadmus of Cos, despite receiving an apparently secure tyranny from his father, gave up the tyranny there from his own sense of *dikaiosune*, writes Herodotus, although he seems to have gone on to rule the town of Zancle (Hdt. 7.164). Such was Cadmus' reputation for justice and reliability that he was trusted with a great deal of gold by the tyrant Gelon to hand over to Delphi or to Xerxes as he thought appropriate (Hdt. 7.163-164). One of the oracles associated with Cypselus predicts that he will *δικαιώσει* Corinth (Hdt. 5.92b). *δικαιώσει* has been translated by scholars in various ways, such as 'chastise', 'punish' and 'bring justice to'.<sup>382</sup> The verb appears in other contexts in Herodotus to mean 'punish' or to think something to be 'just' or 'right'. For example, Psammeticus was not 'punished' with death by his former allies (Hdt. 2.151) and Deioces has offenders 'punished' (Hdt. 1.100). The word is also used by Herodotus in religious contexts regarding the proper ways to behave towards the gods (Hdt. 2.47, 4.186, 6.182). The word is therefore closely connected to punishment and also to the perception of what is considered 'proper' or 'right'. So in the context of the Cypselid prophecy the verb most likely means to 'chastise' or 'punish' Corinth. Given that the oracle talks of the *monarchoi* of Corinth and from Theognis, Solon and Herodotus we know that *monarchoi* are tyrannical and lawless, 'punish' would fit the context. The poetry of Theognis and Solon also blames the citizens for setting up tyrants, expecting them to suffer for it in the long term in an environment of violence and lawlessness. Solon implies the citizens deserve the inevitable oppression for their greed and stupidity (Solon. 4, 11 [West]). Theognis is quite

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<sup>382</sup> Oost (1972) 17-18. One scholar has argued for a deliberate ambiguity in the verb between 'bring justice' and 'chastise' to allow the Pythia to avoid compromising herself. See den Boer (1957) 339.

explicit about this too, expecting to be among those chastised (Theog. 39-52 [West]). A reasonable interpretation of *dikaiosei* would be that Cypselus will ‘punish’ Corinth. This may very well mean the tyrannical *monarchoi*, the foolish citizens or both parties. Despite the doubts of several scholars regarding the historicity of the Cypselus oracles there are reasonable grounds for suggesting that Cypselus was associated with the administration of justice at least after his lifetime. First because oracular pronouncements were not uncommonly associated with Archaic rulers, and second because of the strong links between Homer and Archaic rulers and the administration of justice. Parker points out the similarities between the oracle that claims that Cypselus will ‘bring justice to’ Corinth and the fragment of Theognis in which the poet fears the arrival of an *andra euthuntēra* who will correct the *hybris* of the city (Theog. 39-40 [West]).<sup>383</sup> A *euthuntēr* is one who corrects, straightens or chastises. Theognis links this man and the chaos in his city with the arrival of *monarchoi*, and this is no contradiction. Deioces of course set out to become tyrant by behaving in a just way, and Herodotus nowhere asserts that Deioces was not a just man. We shall see that being a tyrant was no barrier to using the administration of justice to secure one’s power.

The administration of justice was another method through which Archaic tyrants could, like the Homeric *basileis*, construct and justify their power. The Homeric *basileis* even accumulated wealth in return for maintaining order and dispensing justice. Hesiod made predictable complaints against this system, liable as it was to abuse and corruption. As noted in the previous chapter, Near Eastern kings administered their own laws and used them to create an image of themselves as just and deserving rulers, and their inscriptions focus on justifying the ruler’s position

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<sup>383</sup> Parker (2007) 18-19.



rather than explaining the procedural details of his laws. Although one might speculate that the anecdotes and traditions showing the justice of early tyrants imply they employed this method, this would remain speculation had not several Greek writers been aware that this practice was sinister in nature. Solon and Herodotus observed that a reputation for justice was not enough to justify wielding sole power. Herodotus' story of Deioces the Mede, who seized his tyranny by establishing a reputation as a just man (Hdt. 1.96-102), and Solon's awareness that some would criticise him for not using his position to become tyrant (Solon. 32-3 [West]), reveal a sixth and fifth-century suspicion that individuals might exploit the administration of justice to take power. A ruler who conspicuously displayed his fairness and justice, receiving the community's approval was not novel. Yet Solon and Herodotus not only regarded a single man administering the laws with deep suspicion, but interpreted such a powerful position as tyranny. This suspicion is repeated by Herodotus during the Persian constitutional debate in Book 3. Darius, himself wanting to become king, of course suggests monarchy as the future government of the Persians. Darius explains that the monarch will inevitably be the man who puts down disorder and the associations of evil men who harm the public good (Hdt. 3.80). This particularly cynical episode represents a movement away from the Greek acceptance of just sole-rulers, as depicted in Homer, towards a suspicious and fearful attitude towards unrestrained monarchy, regardless of the monarch's personal attitude to justice. It should not be particularly surprising that Aristotle, writing in the fourth century, should have associated the office of *aisymnetes* so closely with tyranny and monarchy (Arist. *Pol.* 3.1285a).<sup>384</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> Faraguna (2005) 321.

*g) Cultivating popular support*

The methods and practices discussed above were often deployed to cultivate popular support for the ruler among the community. This explains the importance of hosting and participation in games.<sup>385</sup> Cylon was said to have been an Olympic victor (Hdt. 5.71; Thuc. 1.126). Pantares, the father of the tyrants Cleandrus and Hippocrates, may have won an Olympic victory in the late sixth century (Hdt. 7.154; cf. *IvO* 142). Cimon won victories in the chariot races on several occasions before being murdered, possibly by the sons of Pisistratus. Miltiades, son of Cimon, had also won an Olympic victory before he became a tyrant in the Chersonese (Hdt. 6.36).

Victory in the games not only displayed the skill of the victor, it showed the victor's wealth (and his willingness to be generous and pious with that wealth), his positive relationship with the gods and a clutch of impressive virtues. Thucydides has Alcibiades assure the Athenians of his public spirit and trustworthiness by claiming that his victories at the Olympic games showed the glory and power of Athens to the rest of the Greeks (Thuc. 6.16.1-2). Victory in the games brought praise and admiration to the victor at home. The view that games were an opportunity to illustrate the pious use of wealth is supported by the fact that the games were a part of the honours due to the gods and heroes, and victors traditionally made expensive dedications to the gods. The poetry of Pindar and Bacchylides also supports the view that victory helped prove that the victor held the gods' favour. The pious use of wealth and the ability to prove that one was a recipient of the gods' favour were both important phenomena in the rule of the Homeric *basileis*. As Chapter I showed, the *basileis* gained popularity and prestige

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<sup>385</sup> Neer (2007) 231, suggests that victory in the games not only resulted in immediate prestige but translated into some form of political influence.

from hosting and administering games and secured prosperity and security for themselves and their communities by honouring the gods with gifts. A problem emerges when it is ambiguously claimed that victory in the games immediately translated into political power. This is the view maintained by Mitchell; that a ruler or potential ruler needed to display suitably heroic characteristics to justify their rule and therefore the games were an ideal opportunity to give a ‘repeated expression of their *aretē*.’<sup>386</sup> While this may be correct, broadly speaking, Mitchell does not explain what tangible benefits arose for the victor.<sup>387</sup> Mitchell states that ‘Panhellenic victories also obviously had an on-going importance for rulers in maintaining the ideological basis of their rule...’.<sup>388</sup> This misinterprets the motivation for taking part in games as no Archaic source unequivocally portrays tyranny as a positive phenomenon or attributes to it a socially acceptable ideology of rulership.<sup>389</sup> Furthermore the rule-of-law ideology that emerged throughout Greece from around 650 was uncompromising in its hostility to sole rulers. There was simply no ‘ideological basis’ for Archaic tyrants to maintain. Instead the benefits of victory in the games must have been, to a wealthy Greek ruler, specific and tangible.

The Archaic *demos*, like the Homeric community of the late eighth century, was not a silent body incapable of coordinated action or of defending itself.<sup>390</sup> A number of scholars have described the Archaic populace as such or largely ignored them in their studies. Singor, for example, depicts large numbers of Archaic

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<sup>386</sup> Mitchell (2013) 71.

<sup>387</sup> Mitchell (2013) 69-73.

<sup>388</sup> Mitchell (2013) 71.

<sup>389</sup> With the possible exception of the epinician poetry of Pindar and Bacchylides, but even these sources are somewhat ambiguous toward tyranny, never praising the phenomenon itself as a form of rule.

<sup>390</sup> This has been noted by van Wees (2008) 38: ‘it is a mistake to picture early Greek assemblies as wholly powerless, no more than a token audience for elite decision-making.’

Athenians as militarily incompetent and poorly armed, if armed at all.<sup>391</sup> Yet Athens alone provides a number of instances where the community actively and successfully defended itself against tyranny. When Cylon seized the Acropolis of Athens during the later half of the seventh century Herodotus describes the opposition that thwarted his attempt as the public officials that represented the community.<sup>392</sup> Herodotus even names the specific officials that he believed handled the situation as the *prytaneis* of the *naukraroi* (Hdt. 5.71).<sup>393</sup> Cylon was not opposed and defeated by another rival family or by a specific social class. Thucydides also writes that ‘the Athenians’ came together to oppose Cylon and that the siege of the Acropolis was managed by public officials, in this case he writes that it was the archons who lead the resistance (Thuc. 1.126). Pisistratus’ third attempt to become tyrant was opposed by those of ‘the Athenians’ who did not join with him (Hdt. 1.62). After being appointed archon in 508 Isagoras was set up as tyrant by Cleomenes of Sparta (Hdt. 5.74). After seizing the Acropolis with his supporters and allies, Isagoras was besieged by ‘the Athenians’ who had united behind the *boule* to resist him (Hdt. 5.72). This kind of popular opposition implies the need for strong popular support for existing and

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<sup>391</sup> Singor (2000) 110, claims: ‘What role the lower classes could play in a serious war is not immediately clear, but one can presume that in times of emergency they could be called up to fight with what weapons were at hand: stones and sticks.’ The idea of a docile and militarily inept Archaic populace has proven tenacious. A number of scholars believe that the Archaic population, particularly the ‘lower classes’ or ‘the poor’ had no part to play in the politics of the Archaic *polis*. This is the view adopted, for example, by Anderson (2005) 178: ‘Early poleis were...oligarchies, and politics would remain essentially an elite preserve down to the late archaic era.’ This view persists in the most recent scholarship. Mitchell (2013) 61, writes: ‘While previous scholarship had thought that the politics of the archaic *tyrannoi* was based on popular support, it has become increasingly clear that the object of elite politics was not the rest of the community but other members of the elite.’ This is not the view of this thesis, and there is no need to presume that the majority of the Archaic population played no part in war and therefore could not play a decisive role in resisting tyranny. The free population was already playing a central role in combat in the late eighth century. The majority of the Ithakan assembly, composed of the free men of the community, seizes their arms when they are encouraged to kill Odysseus, for example.

<sup>392</sup> For some discussion on the dating of Cylon’s coup see Hornblower (1991) 204.

<sup>393</sup> Thucydides describes the officials who dealt with Cylon as the nine archons (Thuc. 1.126). The two accounts therefore differ in the exact identity of the public officials who lead the resistance to Cylon. See Hornblower (1991) 209.

potential tyrants.<sup>394</sup> The Athenian community of the seventh and sixth centuries had both the inclination and the means to defend itself against individuals attempting to seize power, supporting the evidence of Theognis and Solon that suggests the existence of an Archaic prejudice against the rule of one man and undermining the theory that battling over the question of tyranny was the preserve of the elite. The Athenians were even led by their public officials who, in each case, appear to have responded to the threat of tyranny with alacrity. Tyrants were resisted by the Archaic and Classical Greek communities because, as discussed in the previous chapter, they were inevitably placed above the law and consequently the property and persons of the citizens of the *polis* were not safe under their rule. A sole ruler also contradicted almost every single aspect of the rule-of-law ideology which had spread throughout the Greek world from the seventh century and which was staunchly advocated by Solon's poetry and praised by Herodotus.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>394</sup> The attempts by the populace, or at least by a significant proportion of the populace, to resist tyranny at Athens clearly contradict the theory advocated by some scholars that tyranny was the product of Greek 'aristocrats' struggling against each other for supremacy, with no, or only token, participation from the general populace. The example of Athens, and the ultimate fate of several tyrants, also contradicts the theory that tyranny was, in a general sense, morally or politically ambiguous to the Greeks, attracting praise and blame in equal measure. Both of these theories are suggested by de Libero (1996) 32, commenting on Solon. 33[West]: 'Die Ambivalenz des Tyrannis-Begriffes in Athen wird an diesem Fragment besonders deutlich: Während sich τυραννίς bei Solon in ihrem negativen Sinn offenbart als seine egozentrische, dem Gemeinwesen schädliche Herrschaft, wird sie bei einigen athenischen Aristokraten zu einer erstrebenswerten, von den Göttern gewählten Vorrangstellung, die unermeßlichen Reichtum verheißt. Unklar bleibt aber hier, auf welchem Weg sich die neuen Tyrannen ihre ersehnten Schätze zu beschaffen gedachten.'

Der Tyrannis-Begriff, der auch bei Solon in der *Monarchia* sein Synonym besitzt, ist im Athen des frühen 6. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. weder einseitig positive noch negative ausgeprägt. Gegner wie Befürworter der Tyrannis verwenden gleichermaßen den Terminus in Verbindung mit den ihnen genehmen Assoziationen.' There are several problems with de Libero's view. Firstly, Solon never implies that tyranny was being sought after exclusively by 'aristocrats'. Solon's poetry associates tyranny with greed, as in Solon. fr. 33 [West], and violence (Solon 9, 32 [West]) but never includes class based connotations. Secondly, while de Libero is correct to state that the term *turannis* could be used by individuals in certain situations and with associations they found suitable, Solon's warnings against greed and violence, found also in Theognis and more generally in Hesiod, prevent us from concluding that tyranny, as described by Solon's poetry, was an ambiguous term. Solon's poetry uncompromisingly describes tyranny as devastatingly harmful to the community.

<sup>395</sup> Some scholars have overlooked the essential threat posed by the tyrant to the free community of the *polis* and the simple fact that the tyrant simply circumvented the careful system of political checks and balances introduced to Greece c.650 as key reasons for conflict between communities and tyrants. Instead, resistance to tyranny is too often attributed to a nebulous 'elite' or a largely anonymous

Other tyrants found themselves in difficulty when they lost popular support or incurred the anger and resentment of their people, one had the gates of his city shut in his face by his former subjects before being wounded and driven away (Hdt. 6.5). Consequently Archaic tyrants were concerned with encouraging and maintaining popular support. Chapter I discussed that the Homeric *basileis* not only feared losing the support of their people but feared their anger and resentment.<sup>396</sup> Their conspicuous involvement in religious ritual and the administration of justice was partly encouraged by the desire to maintain the support of their community. Therefore attempts by Archaic tyrants to create and maintain popular support were neither novel nor necessarily about soliciting the aid of the mob, but were necessary to secure their position at the head of the community.

## II

By looking at a broad picture of Archaic tyranny it has been shown that certain methods were used by tyrants and prospective tyrants to gain power during the Archaic period. These methods have thus far not departed from those employed by the Homeric *basileis*, suggesting continuity between the behaviour of Homeric and

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clique of 'aristocrats' whose supposedly ferociously competitive nature compelled them into violent conflict with tyrants. For example Mitchell (2013) 15, writes: 'It was certainly the case that, across the Greek world, rule by one man, or rule by one man and his family, did not sit easily in a political culture that was competitive and which also had a strong egalitarian ethos, particularly among the political elite.' The problem with this view is that it does not consider the conflict between tyranny and the rule-of-law ideology or acknowledge the fact that no Archaic source ever characterises resistance to tyranny as class based.

<sup>396</sup> White (1955) 1, claims: 'The earliest tyrants were not demagogues for the simple reason that there was as yet no *demos* upon whose shoulders they could rise.' While White is correct to state that early tyrants were not demagogues, the above claim does not consider the evidence of Homer or Archaic poetry, which not only suggests the presence of an Archaic *demos*, but one that was capable of action. This view does not see the connections between tyrants and the need to cultivate popular support.

Archaic rulers. Essentially, the Archaic tyrants retained the substance of Homeric practices but many, as we shall see, adopted some of the outward trappings of the rule-of-law ideology. We will now turn to the Pisistratids of Athens as a case study. Pisistratus and his family will be examined because the historical record for their rule is more complete than that of any other Archaic tyrant, and in this record Pisistratus and his family can be seen making use of all the methods described above. Furthermore, the Pisistratids are regularly discussed by scholars attempting to summarise the broader phenomenon of tyranny and have been continuously associated with the flawed theories of Archaic economic and social crises.

There is also little scholarly consensus regarding the means and methods by which Pisistratus took power and attempts to move towards this have been hampered by widespread and firmly entrenched misconceptions regarding Archaic society.<sup>397</sup> This problem has been compounded by the fact that scholarship has preferred to study the supposed periods of reform immediately before and after the period of Pisistratid rule rather than the tyranny itself.<sup>398</sup> When the Pisistratids themselves have been studied, a large amount of scholarship has focused on attempting to link

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<sup>397</sup> E.g. Andrewes (1956) 106: 'The two older parties [of Pisistratus] had probably a similar local and personal structure: they may have been divided by principle also, the one claiming and the other resisting the benefit of Solon's reform, but this view of them should be supported not so much by the names of the parties as by the character of the Alcmeonidae and the actions of Megacles, and the probability that Lycurgus belonged to the older nobility.' Andrewes' approach to the nature of the supporters of Pisistratus and his rivals is hampered by his failure to recognise the tyrant's acute need for popular support and for allies who had to be acquired through marriage or some other social practice. It is a view which also subscribes to the false idea of an Archaic 'noble' or 'aristocratic' class battling against the legal and social changes of the seventh and sixth centuries. Some of these ideas were also adopted by Mossé (1969) 61, who characterised the parties of Megacles and Lycurgus as aristocratic factions and links the party of Pisistratus with the *demos*: 'Ainsi en face des deux factions aristocratiques dont les assises sociales, sinon géographiques, étaient identiques, le parti de Pisistrate s'identifiait avec le *demos*.' The problem with this approach to Pisistratus is that it directs attention away from the tangible and quite traditional methods he and his family used to gain power, for which there is evidence that can be contextualised with further Homeric and Archaic examples, and instead directs scholarly attention towards social and economic phenomena for which there is no firm evidence.

<sup>398</sup> As noted by Frost (1985) 57: 'The Peisistratid period on the other hand is often viewed as a betrayal of the promising development of democracy. The causes of tyranny have been declared more significant than anything that went on during that tyranny and the regime in general was seen through Aristotelian eyes as a mere phase occurring between aristocratic and democratic polities.'

the family to specific territories within and outside Attica, instead of the methods they used to gain power or their behaviour when in power. This section will show that their methods of gaining and maintaining power did not depart from those of the eighth-century *basileis* or their Archaic contemporaries.<sup>399</sup>

Discerning the relationship between the Pisistratids and the Athenians is absolutely critical in order to discover the methods by which they took and held power. Following this approach, as Kinzl astutely observes, will only have historical significance if we can divide the Archaic realities and useful information from the anachronisms of the surviving sources.<sup>400</sup> The various problems with the sources on Archaic tyranny are just as acute regarding the Pisistratids of Athens.<sup>401</sup> Pisistratus and his family ruled Athens for a long period of time, although the exact chronology of the three periods of Pisistratid rule is confused and still uncertain. The main accounts of Pisistratid rule, found in Herodotus, Thucydides and *The Constitution of the Athenians*, do not agree chronologically.<sup>402</sup> Regarding the dates of Pisistratus' three coups and the periods of exile they give different periods of time, suggesting either ignorance or differing sources. Furthermore, almost a century separates the earliest accounts of Pisistratid rule, Herodotus and Thucydides, from the expulsion of Hippias in 511/0, leading to the problems that historical distance entails and the kind of confusion regarding the facts that Thucydides describes and attempts to

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<sup>399</sup> See Andrewes (1956) 107-113, for an outdated but still useful account of how Pisistratus maintained his power.

<sup>400</sup> Kinzl (1979) 310: 'Ein solcher Versuch kann jedoch nur dann sinnvoll erscheinen, wenn es uns irgendwie gelingt, das Historisch-Faktische aus seiner anachronistisch überlagerten Umgebung herauszuschälen.'

<sup>401</sup> The problems particular to Herodotus' account (Hdt. 1.59-64), for example, have been noted by the commentators: 'What should have been essentially a chapter on the economic, social, and constitutional history of Athens c.560-46BC is reduced in this digression to a series of anecdotes, portents, rumours, and stratagems bearing upon tyranny.' Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella (2007) 119.

<sup>402</sup> Herodotus has generally been considered to contain the most reliable account of the family. E.g. Barceló (1993) 161.



clarify.<sup>403</sup> An additional problem is represented by the hostility of the Athenians after the expulsion of Hippias to the Pisistratids and tyranny in general. It is possible to interpret later Athenian sources on the Pisistratids as apologies for collaboration with the tyrants and attempts to distance the Athenians from the Pisistratids. This has made a number of historians sceptical regarding the validity of the sources on the Pisistratid tyranny. This should not, however, influence the records of the methods they used to take power as these, as we shall see, continue to conform entirely to the behaviour of their contemporaries and Homeric predecessors.

The Pisistratid family and their supporters were associated with several regions of Attica<sup>404</sup> and the Pisistratids probably owned property abroad in northern Greece<sup>405</sup> and possibly in Sigaeum. At the centre of the family were Pisistratus and his legitimate sons Hippias and Hipparchus. Two other sons of Pisistratus are attested in the sources. These are Hegesistratus, called a *nothos* by Herodotus (Hdt. 5.94), and Thessalus. These were believed to be the younger brothers by Thucydides (Thuc. 1.20). The author of *The Constitution of the Athenians* wrote that Hegesistratus and Thessalus were in fact the same person, one name being merely a

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<sup>403</sup> See Flament (2010) 6-20, for a discussion of the chronology of the Pisistratid tyranny presented in *The Constitution of the Athenians*.

<sup>404</sup> French (1959) 57, concluded that Pisistratus had a local area of support. French also cited the now outdated theories of economic crisis and reform as a source of support for Pisistratus within the city of Athens itself. A more recent article by Goušchin (1999) 18, regarding Pisistratus' leadership of the 'hillmen', illustrates the persistence of the idea that the factions struggling for supremacy in Attica at this time must have been class-based: 'It does not matter that Herodotus keeps silence of Pisistratus' appointment. Herodotus (and A.P. as well) labels Pisistratus as *prostas*. It was enough for him and for his readers to understand that the Diakrioi (Hyperakrioi in Herodotus' work) were not an aristocratic faction. They were a political group which appeared as a result of the mutual agreement of Pisistratus and the *demos*. Pisistratus had to promulgate his democratic (or demagogic) programme in order to become the people's leader. Although we hear nothing of it, Pisistratus must have had such a programme. Herodotus hints at its existence when he says that Pisistratus was *prostas* in word only: he considers Pisistratus' programme to be a trick.' Goušchin's comments reveal the underlying weakness of this position. By relying on the anachronistic *Athenaion Politeia*, ignoring the conspicuous absence of class-based support for tyranny in Solon and Herodotus and *assuming* that Pisistratus at least claimed to be ideologically motivated, a misleading picture of Athenian tyranny has been created. This view ignores the oldest evidence for Athenian tyranny and imposes fourth century political assumptions on an Archaic world where they simply did not exist.

<sup>405</sup> For a discussion of some of Pisistratus' activity in northern Greece see Cole (1975) 42-44.

nickname, and names a further son of Pisistratus as Iophon ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 17). Thessalus is named by Thucydides among the *gnesioi* of Pisistratus (Thuc. 6.55). Beyond Hippias and Hipparchus the record of Pisistratus' sons is clearly confused. Pisistratus was probably married at least three times and it is unclear whether he remarried after his previous wife's death or practised polygamy. The family enjoyed friendly relations with other Greek *poleis* and powerful families, most notably with Argos, Thessaly, and Eretria. Pisistratus was supported by Lygdamis of Naxos and the Pisistratid family, headed now by Hippias, are called the *xenoi* of the Lacedaemonians on no fewer than three occasions by Herodotus (Hdt. 5.63, 90, 91). The Pisistratids also had friends and supporters within Attica and the city of Athens itself. The level of support for Pisistratus within Attica is particularly hard to discern due to the hostility of the Athenians to tyranny after the exile of Hippias; however, some information can be gleaned from Herodotus and Thucydides. Pisistratus himself appears to have been a man of wealth and had led Athenian soldiers against Megara with great success. He must have made himself very popular in Athens and Attica as large numbers of Athenians had not only acquiesced to his rule on three separate occasions but actually assisted him in his three bids for the tyranny. The sources mention geographically defined areas of support for Pisistratus<sup>406</sup> and sympathetic Athenians leaving the city to join Pisistratus' army before the battle of Pallene. This fact becomes more significant when we consider that, in the seventh century, the population of Athens had come together to resist and defeat Cylon, who was himself an Olympic victor.

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<sup>406</sup> Sealey (1960) 164, interprets Pisistratus' geographically defined supporters as his 'local retainers'. Lewis (1963) 36, sees the reforms of Cleisthenes as a deliberate attempt to break up some of these areas of local loyalty.

### a) Warfare

Despite the fact that we hear of very little violence during the periods of Pisistratid rule,<sup>407</sup> military prestige, military success, the use of violence and armed supporters all continued to be used by the family in their pursuit of power. Before any of his three attempts to become tyrant Pisistratus already enjoyed the fame and prestige won through his military success against Megara (Hdt. 1.59; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 14.1),<sup>408</sup> although he later added to his reputation by conquering Naxos (Hdt. 1.64) and Sigaeum (Hdt. 5.94). When in power Pisistratus and his family successfully pursued conflicts on behalf of Athens (Thuc. 6.54). The group of supporters mentioned by Herodotus and *The Constitution of the Athenians* that supposedly formed Pisistratus' third faction against Megacles and Lycurgus is curiously inactive in these accounts (Hdt. 1.59; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 13.4).<sup>409</sup> That Pisistratus held a geographically defined area of support is not at all unlikely, but a better gauge of his popularity at Athens would be Herodotus' statement that many Athenians joined Pisistratus to fight for him after he invaded Attica via Marathon (Hdt. 1.62). If Athenians made up Pisistratus' band of club-bearers and fought for him at Pallene it follows that many could have fought for him and his family in the later wars mentioned by Thucydides (Thuc. 6.54). This provides some of the grounds for

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<sup>407</sup> The Pisistratid attitude towards the Athenians while in power appears to have generally been one of restraint. A notable exception would be the murder of Cimon by Pisistratus' sons during the reign of Hippias (Hdt. 6.103). Unfortunately Herodotus does not specify exactly why Cimon was killed, merely stating that it happened. However Cimon's repeated victories in the four-horse chariot race at Olympia suggest that he was wealthy and, considering that Cylon and Pisistratus were Olympic victors themselves, viewed as a potential rival by Hippias.

<sup>408</sup> Kinzl (1979) 308, believes Pisistratus participated in the war with Megara in the official capacity of *archon polemarchos*.

<sup>409</sup> Attempts to identify Pisistratus' supporters during his first coup, Herodotus' *hyperakrioi*, have been severely hampered by the superimposing of classes, particularly a hoplite class, on Archaic Athens: E.g. Holladay (1977) 52.

dispelling the myth that early tyrants were brought to power and secured their position over an unwilling populace with the help of foreign mercenaries.<sup>410</sup>

The Pisistratids were particularly careful to amass armed support from various sources at critical moments. Pisistratus' particularly consistent success in this area not only speaks to his accomplishments as a soldier and his personal popularity but also reveals the remarkably diverse practices through which a tyrant could gather military support. Pisistratus acquired a band of men armed with clubs (*korunephoroi*)<sup>411</sup> through a ruse that he used to seize control of Athens for the first time in c.561/0<sup>412</sup> (Hdt. 1.59). Pisistratus was assisted in his third and final coup (c.546) by Argive soldiers assembled through his marriage to the Argive woman Timonassa (Hdt. 1.61; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 17.4).<sup>413</sup> These are generally called mercenaries by historians. However their status as mercenary troops is debatable. The picture is confused by the conflicting nature of the sources. For example, Herodotus calls the Argive troops who supported Pisistratus *misthotoi* (Hdt. 1.61), yet the later source on Pisistratus, *The Constitution of the Athenians* states that these Argives came because of friendship (*philia*) created through Pisistratus' marriage to an Argive woman ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 17.4). The Argives were led by Pisistratus' son,

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<sup>410</sup> E.g. Frost (1984) 291, has written that Pisistratus' third coup was supported by a mercenary force, listing the Eretrians, Naxians and Argives as mercenaries. Cf. Lavelle (2005) 159, regarding the final tyranny of Pisistratus: 'It certainly did not depend on a permanent foreign mercenary force, which oppressed the Athenians. This would have been ineffective, and there is no sign whatsoever of its existence in any case.'

<sup>411</sup> Lavelle (2005) 95-96, doubts the reliability of Herodotus' account of these men, questioning if these were even 'club-bearers' at all, given the uselessness of such weapons against conventionally armed soldiers. Lavelle does not, however, doubt that Pisistratus had armed supporters at this time.

<sup>412</sup> The dates for Pisistratus used here are those of Rhodes. For a valuable summary of the source material for Pisistratid chronology see Rhodes (1976) 219-233; (1981) 191-199. A similar chronology is adopted by Asheri, Lloyd and Corcella. Asheri places the continuous period of Pisistratid rule, from the third coup to the expulsion of Hippias, from c.547/6 to 511/10. (2007) 119. Hind (1974) 7-8, compiles a number of the chronologies for Pisistratus' coups and periods of exile that were published prior to that of Rhodes. For a summary of the problems inherent in establishing a Pisistratid chronology see Ruebel (1973) 125-136. For cunning and trickery as a particular hallmark of tyranny see Luraghi (2014) 67-92.

<sup>413</sup> Note Cawkwell (1995) 73-86, for some of the serious problems with the *Athenian Constitution* as a source for the Pisistratids.

Hegisistratus. Hegesistratus was the son of Pisistratus and Timonassa, suggesting that these were indeed allies secured through the ties established by marriage and friendship. *The Constitution of the Athenians* also mentions armed support from Eretria and Thebes and claims that Pisistratus hired (μισθωσάμενος) soldiers from around Pangaeum for his final coup ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 15.2). Pisistratus was able to return to power for the third and final time by defeating the Athenian army at Pallene (Hdt. 1.63). Once installed in power Pisistratus continued to cultivate armed support, collecting more *epikouroi* (Hdt. 1.64).<sup>414</sup> The Pisistratids were later able to call in support from the Thessalians against their enemies, also called *epikouroi* by Herodotus (Hdt. 5.63). The sources say nothing more about precisely how the Pisistratids built a relationship with the Thessalians, although the point that Pisistratus possibly had a son named Thessalus has created some speculation on the relationship (Thuc. 1.20; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 18.2; Diod. Sic. 10.17). The attitude of the later sources towards Pisistratus' soldiers was to view them as mercenaries in the fourth-century sense: warriors contracted and paid a wage by the government. However, a social practice, marriage, lies behind Pisistratus' ability to recruit the substantial body of Argive soldiers for his final coup and in Homer the Trojans give their *epikouroi* food and gifts despite the existing ties of friendship, kinship and marriage with their leaders. This makes it unlikely that Pisistratus ever truly relied on mercenaries.<sup>415</sup>

The Pisistratids also maintained guest-friendships with powerful individuals from other *poleis* including at least one Spartan king. After regretting their ousting of

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<sup>414</sup> Thucydides also believed that Hippias appeared in public with *doruphoroi* (Thuc. 6.57). For an informative discussion of the nature of Pisistratus' *epikouroi* see Singor (2000) 112-119, and 110-111 for a useful summary of Pisistratid military activity.

<sup>415</sup> This is supported by Lavelle (1993a) 10: 'The men are not mercenaries but allies: allies from Thebes, from Naxos, and very probably from Eretria (cf. [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 15.2); partisans from the Attic countryside; and the city fighters who answered Pisistratus' call to arms.'

the Pisistratids the Spartans even attempted to reinstall their *xenos*, Hippias, to his position of tyrant of Athens (Hdt. 5.91). Herman has contextualised such relationships within the concept of ritualised friendship. Herman logically concludes that the large gifts of wealth and manpower made to Pisistratus and his family by their friends only made long-term sense if they expected some form of reciprocation.<sup>416</sup> This is particularly significant for figures like Lygdamis of Naxos or the men who led contingents allied with the Pisistratids, such as the Thessalians or even the Spartan king.<sup>417</sup> These relationships were crucial to the Pisistratid cause because these individuals headed large numbers of followers and had access to substantial resources. Pisistratus' private property and his ability to collect more wealth through his friends and personal connections enabled him to secure military support by giving him the ability to maintain *epikouroi* who had to be fed and rewarded with wealth in one form or another. Pisistratus certainly collected military support through conventional methods such as marriage, personal connections and distributing private wealth. It is not unreasonable to suggest that the later sources may be confusing these practices with the purchasing of mercenary troops.<sup>418</sup>

#### b) *Wealth*

Many Archaic tyrants or potential tyrants were wealthy individuals. Personal wealth was required to use many of the methods required to take power, such as maintaining

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<sup>416</sup> Herman (1987) 91.

<sup>417</sup> Herman (1987) 92: 'Ritualised friends heading entire social units bestowed favours on each other relying on the probability that when the need arose the favours would be repaid.'

<sup>418</sup> Lavelle (1993b) 109-110, is one of the few scholars to argue that Pisistratus' *epikouroi* were not 'mercenaries'. Lavelle (1993b) 110-111, also cites four separate sources which imply that the tyrant's *doryphoroi* were Athenians, not foreign mercenaries. These include Aristophanes' *Knights* (ll. 448-449), in which Paphlagon's grandfather is said to have been one of the *doryphoroi*, and Herodotus, in which Pisistratus is given a guard of club-bearers from the Athenian assembly (Hdt. 1.59). Cf. Lavelle (2005) 95-96.

soldiers, establishing friendships with other powerful men, and arranging marriage alliances with influential families. Wealth was also needed for less overt methods of constructing power such as distributing largesse, building temples, offering sacrifice and providing expensive offerings for sanctuaries.<sup>419</sup> The careful use of wealth was absolutely crucial to Pisistratus' rise to power. As pointed out by Lavelle, Herodotus seems to be at pains to emphasise the significance of wealth to Pisistratus' cause, repeatedly mentioning wealth, particularly *chremata* or variations of the word (Hdt. 1.61-62).<sup>420</sup> The Pisistratids were able to maintain varying numbers of armed men and construct temples and buy dedications for the gods.<sup>421</sup> To afford any of these Pisistratus and his family must have had access to large amounts of wealth. This wealth came from a number of sources. Pisistratus almost certainly owned estates in Attica itself as his property (*chremata*) was substantial enough to be noted by Herodotus as being put up for sale during his exile (Hdt. 6.121).<sup>422</sup> The geographically defined area of support for Pisistratus also suggests that he possessed land in that specific region. The Pisistratids probably owned property around the river Strymon in northern Greece as they were able to gather revenue (*chremata*) from there during their exile (Hdt. 1.64).<sup>423</sup> Their rule over other regions beyond

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<sup>419</sup> Lavelle (2005) 143, has claimed that Pisistratus may have employed his *chremata* to bribe some Athenians to join him before Pallene or at least refuse to fight him. Unfortunately there is no evidence for this in the sources and it remains speculation.

<sup>420</sup> Lavelle (1993a) 10.

<sup>421</sup> Lavelle (2005) 159, makes the claim that Pisistratus simply enriched the Athenians from his own property in order to maintain his position, and that Hippias did likewise, ultimately losing his tyranny when he ceased to do so. This is perhaps an oversimplification of the process. We do not hear of Pisistratus distributing wealth to the Athenians generally or of Hippias doing the same.

<sup>422</sup> Pisistratid power derived from land and agricultural wealth is noted by de Libero (1996) 50: 'Die Familie wird einen durch Einkünfte aus den ländlichen Gütern finanzierten, ihrem ihrem Sozialstatus angemessenen Lebensstil gepflegt haben, der sie auch im politischen Bereich aktiv werden ließ.'

<sup>423</sup> It seems unlikely that Pisistratus was harvesting silver and gold from the area around Pangaion. The wealth from the northern territories probably came from elsewhere. As stated by Lavelle (1993a) 6: 'If appreciable amounts of Thracian gold or silver were continually flowing down to the tyrants at Athens from 546, we should expect some commensurate signs of prosperity, especially in the coinage of the times. But the signs we have are rather to the contrary: the *Wappenmünzen*, the so-called 'heraldic' coins of Pisistratus' final tyranny are relatively few in number, small in denomination, and apparently designed for local use and circulation only; they do not bespeak abundance or prosperity,

Athens, such as Sigaeum,<sup>424</sup> may also have provided income through tithes or private property, although this must remain speculation. The Pisistratids may have levied some form of tithe on the Athenians.<sup>425</sup> The tithe, as reported by Thucydides and the *Athenaion Politeia*, is a curious phenomenon which is obviously out of place in Archaic Greece (Thuc. 6.54; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.4). It is, however, a practice firmly grounded in the customs of the Homeric world. It appears to have been based on the tyrant's ability to resolve disputes and bring order to the community and will therefore be discussed further in the section below on justice. It is important to note that one of the reasons that the nature of the Pisistratid tithe has vexed scholars is the fact that it blends the public and the private.<sup>426</sup> Much like the *basileis* the Pisistratus led and brought order to the community and in return collected wealth from the public. Consequently the tithe is a problematic phenomenon for a scholarly view that sees the severing of the public and private spheres as a crucial development of the Archaic period.

The Pisistratids also received wealth from friends and supporters. During his second exile Pisistratus received gifts (δωτίνας) from *poleis* that owed him something (Hdt. 1.61). Unfortunately Herodotus does not specify precisely *why* these *poleis* owed Pisistratus, but given the ability of Homeric *basileis* to collect gifts

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but rather a limited economy and restricted resources of silver even compared with the tyranny after Pisistratus.'

<sup>424</sup> Sigaeum was secure enough for Hippias to flee there when he was driven from Athens in 511/10.

<sup>425</sup> Lavelle (2005) 96-97, is sceptical about the historicity of a such a tithe, citing the political and practical implications of collecting such a tax. Lavelle does not, however, draw the comparison between this sixth century tithe and the ability of the Homeric *basileis* to collect valuables and agricultural produce from the populace. This overlap in practice, between the Pisistratids and Homeric *basileis*, has already been pointed out by Harris (1997) 103, 107-111. The continuation of this practice into the Archaic period would also answer the queries of scholars regarding Solon. fr. 33 and precisely *how* one became wealthy through simply being a tyrant. E.g. de Libero (1996) 32: 'Unklar bleibt aber hier, auf welchem Weg sich die neuen Tyrannen ihre ersehnten Schätze zu beschaffen gedachten.'

<sup>426</sup> As noted by Smith (1989) 63: 'Herodotus also mentions (Hdt. 1.64) Peisistratos' revenue from property on the Strymon, and it is probable that there was little distinction between taxes officially raised and the tyrant's personal income from various sources.'



through various social practices, we should not see anything particularly radical here. These contributions were probably the fruit of personal and informal connections as Herodotus uses the noun δῶρίνῃ, meaning a gift or present, to describe them and Pisistratus was able to acquire them at his own discretion. Unfortunately Herodotus only names one of the contributors, Lygdamis, who provided men and *chremata*. The relationship between Pisistratus and Lygdamis appears to have been reciprocal, as Pisistratus would later give him the island of Naxos to rule (Hdt. 1.64), further supporting the theory that Pisistratus collected gifts through personal connections and an element of reciprocity.

### c) *Religious practice*

Although the evidence for Pisistratid interaction with religion is sparse, the surviving sources are telling and indicate that the Pisistratids engaged with religious practices, customs and dedicatory sacrifices in the same manner as their Archaic contemporaries and Homeric predecessors. Some of the most well-known anecdotes about Pisistratus contain elements of religious custom and ritual. Pisistratus supposedly paraded into Athens accompanied by an impersonation of the goddess Athena (Hdt. 1.60; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 14.4)<sup>427</sup> and on his final attempt at seizing power enjoyed the support of a favourable prophetic utterance from an accompanying *mantis* (Hdt. 1.62-63). This use of a *mantis* at a moment of crisis is already an established practice in the poems of Homer, where they are employed to

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<sup>427</sup> This probably occurred in 557/6 or 556/5. Although the historicity of elements or the entirety of this episode has been doubted by several scholars note the comments of Connor (1987) 43: 'Surely we are not forced to choose a single model for the procession. Elements from marriage processions, epic interventions, arrival ceremonies, parades celebrating athletic or military victories, myths, rituals and legends may all be present simultaneously.' On the procession with Phye see Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella (2007) 122-123.

lend legitimacy to an individual or a cause. Herodotus also recorded a story in which he states that a chresmologue named Onomakritos had been a close friend of Hipparchus (Hdt. 7.6). Pisistratus later followed the command of an oracle by ritually purifying the island of Delos (Hdt. 1.64), showing conspicuous piety and presumably going to great personal expense.<sup>428</sup> These oracles are highly favourable towards Pisistratus and scholars have questioned their historicity and original purpose. It is impossible to arrive at a definite conclusion for either question although the Pisistratid oracles are certainly representative of a much broader phenomenon that connected Homeric and Archaic rulers with oracles. Consequently it is difficult to accept the theory that the Pisistratid oracles were fabricated as an excuse or apology for Athenian collaboration under the tyrants. While it is true that Athens was deeply hostile to tyranny after the expulsion of Hippias and, as Thucydides noted, collectively confused as to certain details of the tyranny, any theory that claims the oracles were revisionist propaganda ignores the long and complex tradition of Greek rulers seeking oracular support.<sup>429</sup> The more positive oracles concerning Pisistratus, namely the prophecy made before the battle of Pallene and the command to purify Delos, ultimately fulfil the same goals as the oracles given to Homeric *basileis*. The first predicted Pisistratus' victory, to some extent legitimising violence against his enemies, the second provided an opportunity to demonstrate piety by obeying the commands of the god concerning one of the most important sanctuaries in the Greek world. Pisistratus' son and successor

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<sup>428</sup> Parker (1983) 73.

<sup>429</sup> Lavelle (1993b) 92: 'Consequently, the rationale would proceed, the Athenians did not fail at Pallene, nor was a certain *genos* treacherous for dealing with the tyrant. Rather everyone simply played out their destiny as it had been ordained for them by the gods. What, after all, could have been done to prevent the tyranny? From the account, the Athenians were beaten before a weapon had been lifted, indeed even before Peisistratos was born. They had not – and this in the account is most important – been worsted through any of their own faults: the tyranny of Peisistratos was simply unavoidable; no one was to blame. Under such circumstances, any charge of "collaboration" could hardly be a reasonable one.'

Hippias may have maintained a similar attitude towards the use of oracles as Herodotus not only claimed that the Spartans removed written oracles collected on the Acropolis by the Pisistratids after they ousted Hippias (Hdt. 5.90), but that Hippias himself possessed a ‘precise knowledge’ of certain oracles (Hdt. 5.93).

During their rule the Pisistratids took control of all the proper state sacrifices (Thuc. 6.54) and placed themselves conspicuously in control of the Panathenaea, directing and perhaps appearing in the procession (Thuc. 5.56-57; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 18.3). Diodorus wrote that the daughter of Pisistratus also took part in the procession (Diod. Sic. 9.37). As well as engaging in ritual the Pisistratids gave physical offerings to the gods. Hippias, grandson of Pisistratus, dedicated the altar of the twelve gods in the market place and the altar of Apollo in the Pythium (Thuc. 6.54; *IG I<sup>2</sup> 761*).<sup>430</sup> The Pisistratids also worked on the temple of Olympian Zeus ([Arist.] *Pol.* 5.1313b).<sup>431</sup> Pisistratus and his family carefully observed religious tradition and ensured that religious norms continued to be practised of behalf of the community when they were in power. They also took a conspicuous part in religious rites, visibly connecting themselves with the favour of the gods and consequently the safety and prosperity of the *polis*.

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<sup>430</sup> For the Altar of the Twelve Gods see Shapiro (1989) 133-141. Arnush (1995) 135, has suggested that the altar of Apollo was dedicated in the 490s by Pisistratus son of Hippias who had returned to Athens to support Persia and the encourage return of his father as tyrant.

<sup>431</sup> As with Shapiro (1989) 6, Sealey (1976) 139, fails to link displays of piety with ensuring the prosperity and support of the community: ‘The purposes of Peisistratus and his sons may have concerned merely the splendour and prestige of the family, but their methods were bound to reinforce a sense of unity among the inhabitants of Attica.’ Sealey focuses rather on the glorification of the Pisistratids and the idea of shared cult as a political unifier. This stance does not take into account the evidence of Homer and Hesiod, where the *basileis* secure the favour of the gods for their community or avert their anger by giving the gods gifts or performing the correct rituals. As noted by Parker (1996a) 89, there is absolutely no need to separate piety from expensive displays of wealth and largesse. To see these as mutually exclusive is counterproductive. Andrewes (1956) 133-114, also sees in the supposed Pisistratid involvement with ‘national’ cults a desire to use them to suppress aristocratic factionalism. There are several problems with this. Firstly, as noted above, it ignores the practical and profitable results of honouring the gods generally. Secondly the idea that a ‘national’ cult was apparently the most effective weapon against factionalism or even regionalism requires a leap of faith regarding the reliability of the sources and a tremendous stretch of the imagination. Thirdly no contemporary source ever attributes to an Archaic tyrant the desire to ‘nationalise’ his territory let alone unify it through the creation of new cults.

#### *d) Marriage*

The practice of marriage was instrumental in securing the power of Pisistratus and his family. Pisistratus was able to return to power in 557/6 or 556/5 on the strength of an alliance with his former rival Megacles through a marriage to Megacles' daughter (Hdt. 1.60-61). Reconciliation through marriage is a practice already attested in Homer, where Agamemnon attempted to secure Achilles' support and resolve their quarrel partly through an offer of marriage. The mother of Hegesistratus was probably Timonassa of Argos, although the identity of Pisistratus' other wives is unclear. The identity of the mother of Hippias and Hipparchus is uncertain, although Dreher concludes that she was most likely a member of an important Attic family.<sup>432</sup> In preparation for his third coup in 546/5 Pisistratus recruited Argive warriors through a friendship with the Argives established by marriage to an Argive woman, Timonassa (Hdt. 1.61; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 17). For Pisistratus an influential marriage carried as much military potential as the marriage alliances of the Homeric *basileis*. Marriage of course produced offspring and relatives whose loyalty was relatively secure. Pisistratus and his family made extensive use of their relations in times of need. Like the *basileis* they employed them as councillors, soldiers, public figures and political agents. Several of Pisistratus' descendants may have held the archonship at Athens (Thuc. 6.54; *SEG* 10:352) and Herodotus also tells us that Pisistratus set up his son Hegesistratus as tyrant of Sigaeum (Hdt. 5.94).<sup>433</sup> In both instances the tyrant's children were deliberately placed in positions of power inside and outside Athens. Pisistratus' son Hippias continued to use marriage as a political

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<sup>432</sup> Dreher (2007) 246.

<sup>433</sup> Rhodes (1981) 226, speculates that because Hippias fled to Sigaeum after being driven out by the Spartans in 511/0, the town may have remained under the rule of Hegesistratus at that time.

tool, marrying his daughter to Aeantides, the son of Hippocles tyrant of Lampsacus. Thucydides attributes the marriage to Hippias' desire to secure an overseas refuge and tap into Hippocles' influence with the Persian king (Thuc. 6.59). The legitimate (*gnesioi*) sons of Pisistratus inherited his power, while the *nothoi* and other relatives were still put to good use leading soldiers or occupying important positions. Hegesistratus, for example, led the Argive soldiers who fought on behalf of Pisistratus at the battle of Pallene. Marriage and the relatives it produced were a crucial aspect of Pisistratus' pursuit of power.

#### *e) Justice*

Herodotus mentions that, once in power for the final time, Pisistratus raised revenue in Attica (Hdt. 1.64). Thucydides and the *Athenian Constitution* state that this was a percentage tithe on produce (Thuc. 6.54; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.4), and the *Athenian Constitution* states that Pisistratus visited the countryside administering justice ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.5).<sup>434</sup> It is likely that there was a link between the collection of wealth and the ordering of justice in Attica. Pisistratus was concerned with conspicuously maintaining order and administering justice, or at the very least in

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<sup>434</sup> Several modern accounts of Pisistratus' rule perhaps overemphasise the image of the tyrant as a reformer and innovator. Pisistratus' distribution of loans to farmers and the judging of cases find precedent in Homer and Hesiod, they were not innovative. Applying terms such as 'reform' to Pisistratus reveals an overreliance on Aristotle's anachronistic account of the tyranny. Andrews (1956) 111; Lewis (2009) 38.

appearing to uphold justice.<sup>435</sup> This appears to have created for him a reputation for justice and moderation that endured after his death. Pisistratus not only observed the laws but apparently administered them himself with great fairness (Hdt. 1.59; Thuc. 6.54; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.1,5). A story was circulated in later times that he granted tax exemption to a farmer who grumbled about his tithe ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.6) and appeared in court to face prosecution ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.8). Although the authenticity of these later tales is doubtful they fit well with the other sources' descriptions of Pisistratus as conspicuously just and moderate. In behaving in this manner Pisistratus was not doing anything radical. *Basileis* were expected to uphold *themistes* (*Il.* 9.295-298) and *dike* (*Od.* 19.107-115; Hes. *Op.* 38-39), and maintained popular support by doing so. It would also explain how Pisistratus justified exacting tribute from the Athenians (Hdt. 1.64; Thuc. 6.54; [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.4). Pisistratus was behaving in a traditional manner by keeping order and bringing justice to Attica and collecting wealth as recompense. It is possible that the later sources may be misunderstanding Pisistratus' collection of gifts as direct taxation, which is generally unheard of in the Archaic sources, or perhaps Pisistratus merely formalised the old informal practice of giving the local *basileus* gifts.

A conspicuous display of generosity and fairness could lead to a great deal of popular support and acclamation, as happens to Achilles during the funeral games for Patroklos. This kind of behaviour is also attested in Herodotus' tale of Deioces' rise to power over the Medes. Deioces abused his reputation as a just man, gaining leverage over the populace who granted him tyrannical power in return for

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<sup>435</sup> It was essential for Archaic tyrants to maintain popular support. As noted above, the Archaic *demos*, just like the communities depicted in Homer, was not a silent body incapable of defending itself. It is highly unlikely that the Archaic community was a passive observer of elite competition. E.g. Forsdyke (2005) 19, 26. Forsdyke's view has been refuted by van Wees (2008) 11. As such, Pisistratus faced the same challenges as his contemporaries and Homeric predecessors in attempting to cultivate and maintain his popularity.

maintaining order. Herodotus even writes that Deioces behaved justly in order to become tyrant (Hdt. 1.96-100).<sup>436</sup> Pisistratus conformed to this practice either by dispensing justice himself or providing his own travelling judges ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16.5). Not only would this have brought order and stability to Attica but would have disrupted the need for Athenians to approach other powerful men to settle disputes, such as Pisistratus' old rivals Megacles and Lycurgus. It would also have cultivated a great deal of popular support for Pisistratus himself.

Pisistratus may also have attempted to conceal the nature of his rule over Athens by disguising it with some of the features of the rule of law. Herodotus makes a point of stating that Pisistratus, after installing himself in power, did not disturb the magistracies or meddle with the existing laws (Hdt. 1.59). Thucydides also notes that Pisistratus and his family did not overthrow the ancestral laws (*keimenois nomois*), particularly the annual archonship, which Thucydides states the Pisistratids filled with one of their family members (Thuc. 6.54). However Rhodes notes that the names that survive on the fragment of the inscribed archon list do not appear to be exclusively drawn from the Pisistratid family. Names like Cleisthenes, Miltiades and Calliades are not attested elsewhere as relatives of Pisistratus, leading Rhodes to conclude that 'clearly the tyrants did not rely solely on their own family but secured the cooperation of the leading families of Athens'.<sup>437</sup> If this was the case then the maintenance of the archonship still supports the theory that Pisistratus and his family attempted to disguise the nature of their rule. The poetry of Solon and Theognis predates the rule of Pisistratus and both explicitly name tyranny and

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<sup>436</sup> Although Herodotus' account of Deioces is unlikely to be historically factual, it is more than likely that the tale, as noted by Sancisi-Weerdenburg (2000) 2, accurately reflects 'Greek experience with tyrants.' It is therefore still very useful when investigating the means through which tyrants took power.

<sup>437</sup> Rhodes (1981) 220.

monarchy as deeply harmful to the *polis*. Indeed Solon's poetry expresses the wish to *prevent* tyranny. Furthermore Herodotus' features of monarchy, as expressed by Otanes, include the overthrow of ancestral laws and the lack of open debate and accountability. Pisistratus could have combated these complaints by preserving the traditional offices and observing the laws, as well as allowing courts and other deliberative bodies to continue functioning.<sup>438</sup>

In order to take power we have seen Pisistratus use private wealth, military prestige, personal connections, marriage alliances, religious practice and the administration of justice. The Pisistratids were particularly concerned with securing popular support and must have been fairly successful in this endeavour as there was no serious resistance or substantial opposition to their rule between the third coup of Pisistratus c.546/5 and the expulsion of Hippias in 511/0. This leaves a period of well over three decades in which the family of Pisistratus ruled Athens securely.<sup>439</sup> During this time, Pisistratus and his family did not depart from the established practices of the Homeric *basileis*. Even when the family took control of activities otherwise performed by public officials, such as making war and offering sacrifice on behalf of the city, they were not behaving in a particularly novel manner, but simply using the opportunity to pursue traditional practices themselves.<sup>440</sup> Although the careers of other Archaic tyrants are not as well documented in the sources as that

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<sup>438</sup> This also suggested by Luraghi (2014) 82: 'In general, convincing the citizens that he is something different from what he really is – selfless, just, compassionate – is usually a decisive step on the tyrant's road to power. With an irony worthy of a trickster, the tyrant convinces his fellow citizens to grant him the resources he needs to subdue them.'

<sup>439</sup> Lavelle (1993b) 59-60: 'It is quite evident that, in all that time, the Athenians did nothing noteworthy to be rid of the Peisistratids, were at least complacent about the tyranny, if not openly collaborative with it, until its ultimate stage under Hippias. At that, Spartan arms and intervention induced by the bribes of Alkmeonid exiles, not domestic unrest leading to insurrection, brought the Peisistratid regime down in the end.'

<sup>440</sup> Sancisi-Weerdenburg (2000) 12: 'The tyrants did what the state was supposed to do: in Thucydides' vision political duties were taken over from the city by the ruling family. They were seen by Thucydides as actions on behalf of the collective entity, the polis, and the discharge of some of the city's tasks.'



of Pisistratus, they overwhelmingly conform to the same template by employing traditional practices to take power.

### *Conclusion*

The key to understanding Archaic tyranny is to recognise the level of continuity between the tyrants and the Homeric *basileis*.<sup>441</sup> As with the Homeric *basileis*, the personal wealth, strength and prowess of the tyrant enabled him to secure his position as ruler and justified and maintained his power. This chapter has shown this by investigating the methods by which tyrants gained and maintained power. These methods were the same as those employed by the Homeric *basileis* and therefore the Archaic tyrants represented a continuation of Homeric practices and not a political or social innovation. The legal and social landscape had changed, but the substance of the methods tyrants used to gain power remained consistent with those employed by their Homeric predecessors.

Military success underpinned much of the tyrant's authority although he was obliged to protect and justify this position by fighting against rivals and on behalf of his community. War and raiding also brought tyrants plunder, slaves and territory that they could distribute at will, often to family and loyal supporters. If a tyrant was not able to protect and enlarge his power alone then family and allies were secured to fight on his behalf. *Xenoi*, *hetairoi* and *epikouroi* could be secured through personal relationships and the distribution of wealth. Relationships created through

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<sup>441</sup> This link is a preferable point of focus rather than the flawed theories of social and economic change and upheaval. E.g. Mossé (1969) 3: 'Si l'on essaie de déterminer les facteurs qui ont contribué au développement de la tyrannie, il semble qu'on puisse distinguer deux séries de faits qui dérivent d'ailleurs d'une commune origine : les progrès techniques réalisés dans le monde grec entre IX<sup>e</sup> et le VII<sup>e</sup> siècle et qui ont eu d'importantes repercussions, d'une part dans le domaine de la production et de la vie économique, d'autre part dans le domaine militaire.'

established social practices appear to have underpinned much of the tyrants' military support and they supplemented this by liberally distributing gifts and favours. As we have seen the practice of marriage could not only enhance the groom's personal wealth and status, but could provide the participating families with significant assistance in the form of money and soldiers. The Archaic tyrant's military support did not come from soldiers that we can unequivocally call mercenaries, but from the same methods and personal connections used by the Homeric *basileis* to collect warriors. Archaic tyrants spent their resources to secure armed support because force was the only meaningful method of removing a tyrant.

The particularly sinister nature of the tyrant's control over justice in the *polis*, despite being noted by Solon and Herodotus, is generally overlooked by historians focused on investigating the tyrant's role as a reformer, legislator or political revolutionary. The anecdotes of fairness and wisdom associated with tyrants like Pisistratus indicate the existence of a desire to conspicuously display the tyrant's fairness and justice, as had been practised by the Homeric *basileis* to gain popular support. By upholding justice and maintaining the customs and religious rites of the community, the tyrant not only contributed to the prosperity of the community but, as was the case with Pisistratus, removed the need for the populace to approach other powerful men and potential rivals to resolve disputes. This level of control over the community's system of justice was regarded as dangerous by both Solon and Herodotus because of this.

All of these practices were funded by the tyrant's personal wealth and property, the loot from successful conquests and the contributions and gifts of their friends, relatives and supporters. Despite the tyrants' unique access to wealth and power they were anxious to retain the support of their community. The power of

tyrants rested on maintaining a degree of popular support sustained by military prestige, the conspicuous administration of justice, proper observance of religious practice and the distribution of wealth. When tyrants or potential tyrants failed to maintain popular support they could be resisted and driven from their *polis* as happened to Cylon.

Just like the Homeric *basileis* there was a broad range of methods which Archaic tyrants used to construct their power and they wielded it according to their own means and abilities. Lygdamis of Naxos along with several Ionian tyrants received their tyrannies from other powerful rulers in return for their services, often taking the form of military assistance. Tyrants such as Polycrates and Gelon were remembered primarily as warriors who accumulated booty, territory and slaves through their conquests. Miltiades initiated the tyranny in the Chersonese by giving military leadership to a tribe of Thracians. Other tyrants, such as Miltiades son of Cimon and Terillus appear to have consolidated or defended their tyrannies through significant marriages and subsequently exploiting the resources of their relatives and friends. Pisistratus and his family have been used as a kind of case study because the sources for their rule are the most extant and because they show them engaging with all the various practices used to gain power. The Pisistratids led their supporters in war, exploited their personal connections to accumulate wealth and military power, arranged favourable marriages, and conspicuously administered justice and participated in religious ritual. What the Archaic tyrants share is their consistent adherence to methods of gaining and maintaining power that were not only widespread throughout the Archaic period but firmly entrenched and accepted by the society depicted in the Homeric poems. The tyrants discussed above did not use novel or innovative methods to gain and maintain power, instead they relied on very

old and traditional practices. Neither did they exploit social or economic crises such as an explosion in population or class conflict as there is simply no evidence for these phenomena in the Archaic period. Consequently it is unnecessary to assume that the tyrants were a new phenomenon when their methods remain identical with the *basileis* of the eighth century, despite the rise of the rule-of-law ideology in the seventh century.

## Chapter IV: Classical Tyrants

The first chapter of this thesis investigated the methods employed by the Homeric *basileis* to gain and maintain power. A pattern of evidence emerged from the investigation which showed the *basileis* founding their power on military success, personal connections and engagement with a broad range of social practices. The third chapter investigated the practices used by the Archaic tyrants to gain and maintain power. The Archaic tyrants were examined as a phenomenon, with the Pisistratids discussed as a single case study to illustrate the continuity with which these methods were employed. These practices and methods were discussed rather than the careers of individual tyrants in order to present and discuss a broad pattern of evidence without having to rely on less trustworthy later sources. This approach removed the need to create an unbroken narrative history of any individual tyrant, consequently eliminating the need to fill in the considerable gaps in our knowledge of the careers of early tyrants with speculation. The third chapter concluded that the Archaic tyrants used the same methods to take power as the Homeric *basileis*, relying on their personal prowess, popularity, wealth and a number of significant social practices to take and hold power. Chapter IV will be organised in a similar fashion to the first and third chapters and will show that the methods used by Classical tyrants to gain and maintain their power remained consistent with their Homeric and Archaic predecessors.

A number of scholars have made a clear chronological or character distinction between Archaic and Classical tyrants, treating them as two

fundamentally different species of ruler.<sup>442</sup> As pointed out by Lewis, ‘They were not, it is suggested, the grand and wealthy figures that Cleisthenes and Polycrates had been, but adventurers and opportunists, given a route to power by the social changes which followed the Peloponnesian War.’<sup>443</sup> A further distinction is generally drawn between the tyrants of the wider Greek world, particularly those of the Greek mainland, and the Sicilian tyrants. This distinction was made by Berve who pointed out the issues identified in antiquity: the disturbed and mixed population of Sicilian Greek cities and their supposedly luxurious lifestyles, citing Alcibiades’ speech in Thucydides and the, perhaps rather dubious, evidence of Plato’s seventh letter (Thuc. 6.17; Plato. L.7.326b-326d).<sup>444</sup> Berve claimed that the low intensity of ‘*polis* spirit’ in Greek overseas settlements also contributed to the rise of tyranny in Greek Sicily.<sup>445</sup> This idea has also been voiced in more recent scholarship.<sup>446</sup> Berve

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<sup>442</sup> Mossé (1969) 98, referred to the ‘awakening’ (réveil) of fourth century tyranny. Recent textbooks have also made a distinction between Archaic, mainland Greek tyranny and Sicilian Greek tyranny. E.g. Dillon and Garland (2013) 283.

<sup>443</sup> Lewis (2009) 59. By necessity this chapter will discuss a number of fourth century tyrannies located in what may be considered to be geographically peripheral areas, such as Sicily and Cyprus. Note the comments of Lewis (2000) 97: ‘The prevalence of tyranny in the fourth century, in places across the Greek world, from Sicyon and Pherai to Heracleia and Halicarnassos, is often presented either as a peripheral phenomenon, unrelated to the development of the ‘major’ *poleis*, or as a sign of decline from the political sophistication of the fifth century.’ Lewis is correct to indicate these views as problematic regarding Classical tyranny.

<sup>444</sup> Mossé (1969) 101, also stated that conditions were different in Greek Sicily, citing unstable populations, frequent recourse to mercenaries and, consequently, chronic revolutions.

<sup>445</sup> A similar observation has been made against fifth century Syracuse by Ober (2015) 253, who described the government as: ‘fragile in the face of the pressure of the ongoing war with Carthage and Carthage’s Sicilian allies.’ This is an unfair evaluation of the Greeks of Syracuse, and probably of the Sicilian Greek communities in general. Although we lack detailed evidence of the fifth century ‘constitution’ of Syracuse, there is enough evidence to show that the Syracusans were just as concerned about the possibility of tyranny as their fellow Greeks and took practical steps to guard against it. Syracuse may have had specific laws against tyranny as early as the 450s. Diodorus wrote that a certain Tyndarides who aimed at tyranny and *dynasteia* was tried and condemned to death at this time. Unfortunately Diodorus does not record what the specific charges were against Tyndarides, but also notes that after this incident the Syracusans established a practice similar to the Athenian method of ostracism (Diod. Sic. 11.86.4-5). The author of *The Constitution of the Athenians* wrote that ostracism was introduced in Athens to prevent tyranny as well as to remove the remaining friends of the Pisistratids ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 22.3). Thucydides has Hermocrates complain that the Syracusans had established no fewer than fifteen generals to fend off the Athenian expedition (Thuc. 6.72.4-73.1). This was clearly done in order to avoid the concentration of power in the hands of one man. Although the Syracusans acted on Hermocrates’ advice and reduced the number of generals they still refused to place one man in sole command of the army. The tension between military efficiency and aversion to tyranny in Greek *poleis* is pointed out by Harris (2015) 84: ‘On the one hand, there was a need to

ultimately settled on the military threat posed by Carthage and a subsequent need for efficient, monarchical rule, as the greatest factor in encouraging tyranny in Sicily.<sup>447</sup> Berve notes, for example, that the apparently tyrant-free period in the middle of the fifth century corresponds with a period of relative peace between the Sicilian Greeks and Carthage.<sup>448</sup> These views have partly come about because of the apparent scarcity of tyrants in the fifth century and their sudden resurgence in the fourth century.<sup>449</sup> This chronological gap has created an arbitrary barrier between the two periods of tyranny, provoking some scholars to search for new causes to explain the rise of tyrants in the Classical period. This is linked to a strong belief in modern scholarship that the Classical tyrants took power through foreign mercenaries and demagoguery. These factors, as argued by Berve, supposedly became particularly extreme in Sicily thanks to the presence of a great deal of wealth in certain Sicilian *poleis* and the ever-present military threat from the proximity of Carthage to the island. As we shall see, this view of Classical and Sicilian tyranny as a second and

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centralize military command in one person and to avoid fragmentation, which would inhibit the creation and implementation of a coherent strategy and the execution of orders. On the other hand, the Greek city-state wished to avoid tyranny, which placed one man above the law and posed a threat to the public good and to the rights of individuals.' Syracuse was no different in this respect from mainland *poleis*.

<sup>446</sup> Lomas (2006) 115.

<sup>447</sup> Berve (1967) 221: 'Diese versteht sich erst im Hinblick auf die Gefahr, welche den Hellenen jenes Bereiches von den Karthagern und anderen nichtgriechischen Völkern drohte und eine straffe Zusammenfassung der partikularen Kräfte unter monarchischer Führung notwendig machte.' Parke (1933) 21, had attributed Dionysius I's rise to 'his ability to check Carthage' some thirty years before Berve. For examples of Greeks recognising the efficiency of monarchy or sole-command during war see Harris (2015) 84-85.

<sup>448</sup> Berve (1967) 222. There are grounds for arguing against Berve's conclusion. The last Deinomenid tyrant of Syracuse, Thrasybulus, was not driven out until 466/5. Diodorus also records an incident in the 450s where an individual named Tyndarides attempted to make himself tyrant of Syracuse. Syracuse defeated the attempt and executed Tyndarides when Syracuse was at peace with Carthage (Diod. Sic. 11.86.4-5). Hermocrates, probably in 407, was also resisted by force and ultimately killed due to the Syracusans' fear that he would become a tyrant (Diod. Sic. 13.75.5). Although Syracuse was hostile to Carthage at this time the city still opposed the return of a proven commander with an international reputation because of the fear of tyranny. There are therefore two points which argue against Berve's theory regarding lack of tyranny corresponding with periods of peace with Carthage. First, the last Deinomenid was not expelled until comparatively late and a further attempt at tyranny was made shortly after. The attempt of Tyndarides also had no connection whatsoever to conflict with Carthage. Second, the Syracusans, in the midst of a bloody war with Carthage in 407, chose to guard against tyranny rather than allow the return of Hermocrates, a man regarded by contemporaries as a very fine soldier and logically a good candidate to lead the resistance to Carthage.

<sup>449</sup> E.g. Mossé (1969) 93.

distinct wave of monarchical rulers is not supported by the evidence of the sources.<sup>450</sup>

This chapter will illustrate the continuity between the methods used by the Archaic and Classical tyrants to take and hold power. It will do so by adopting the same structure as Chapter IV, discussing each of the methods and practices used by the Classical tyrants in turn and showing the level of continuity between the Classical tyrants and their Archaic and Homeric predecessors.

If there were differences between the Archaic and Classical tyrants they were limited to the following four points. 1) There were more sophisticated checks and balances in the Classical *poleis* for the potential tyrant to overcome, including laws specifically designed to prevent tyranny and which stipulated harsh penalties.<sup>451</sup> Several instances will be discussed in this chapter where successful, popular Greeks were penalised for overstepping the set limits of their offices, even if they had no aspirations to tyranny, or on the mere suspicion that the individual had tyrannical ambitions. 2) Partly as a consequence of the first point, the Classical tyrants were compelled to work hard to not appear to be tyrants. The Classical tyrants existed in an age where the rule of law was the norm and was already several centuries old. The tyrants therefore came into more extensive contact with the institutions and mechanisms of the rule of law and with citizen bodies who were generally watchful

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<sup>450</sup> Other scholars have gone further and not only viewed Classical tyranny as distinct from Archaic, but viewed it as being of little consequence to Classical Greek history. De Ste. Croix's well-known and extensive work on class in Classical Greece (1981) passes over Classical Greek tyranny almost entirely, only briefly discussing Clearchus of Heraclea and Euphron of Sicily.

<sup>451</sup> For example, the decree of Demophantus at Athens (Dem. 20.159; Lyc. *Leocr.* 125-126). The decree preserved in Andocides 1 has been proven to be a forgery, see Harris (2013/2014) 121-153. The process of *eisangelia* at Athens also guarded specifically against the overthrow of the democracy, acts of treason, and by extension tyranny (Hyp. 4.7). For the problems caused by the checks and balances imposed on the Greek military see Harris (2009) 407-412; and for the Spartan solution to this tension: Harris (2015) 86-90.



against tyranny and corruption.<sup>452</sup> Consequently many of the Classical tyrants made increasingly strenuous attempts to cloak the nature of their power in some of the features of the rule of law. Some of the tyrants discussed in this chapter will be shown to have engaged with the features of the rule-of-law ideology. Some began their tyrannies in perfectly legitimate positions of authority, carrying legally bestowed civil and military powers, a dangerous combination of authority assiduously and strictly avoided by many modern, representative forms of government. In this respect Classical tyrants perhaps employed this method of disguise more intensively than their Archaic counterparts although even this was not entirely innovative. As noted in the third chapter, Pisistratus attempted to disguise the tyrannical nature of his rule with certain features of the rule of law. His maintenance of pre-existing magistracies, preservation of the laws and deference to the courts combined with the conspicuous display of his own personal sense of justice combined to not only obscure the power he held but contributed greatly to his popularity. This method was ultimately not innovative. The Classical tyrants did not deviate from their Archaic predecessors in this way, but merely intensified a method already in existence. 3) There were mercenary forces available in the Classical

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<sup>452</sup> Thucydides wrote that when Athenagoras attempted to dissuade the Syracusans from believing Hermocrates' warnings over the Athenian expedition. He did this partly by encouraging the fear that the warnings were part of an attempt to subvert the government and by implying that Hermocrates wanted to use the situation to gain control of Syracuse (Thuc. 6.36-40). Thucydides believed Hermocrates was a good officer and a man of exceptional courage (Thuc. 6.72) Xenophon also praised Hermocrates as a man of exceptional abilities (Xen. *Hell.* 1.127-31). Diodorus specifically noted that Hermocrates was very popular in Syracuse and was, for a time, the most influential man in the city (Diod. Sic. 13.63.1). Hermocrates' personal prowess and popularity may have made him an object of suspicion in Syracuse as well as praise. Considering his prominence it is unsurprising that Hermocrates was opposed by a significant number of Syracusans. On this subject Caven (1990) 41-42, notes: 'But in the famous debate 'recorded' by Herodotus (which formulated basic constitutional theory for Antiquity), it was noted that the popular leader who put down faction and restored national unity before very long assumed the monarchy. If, therefore, Hermocrates returned and united the nation, he could not help becoming a tyrant.' The level of distrust towards Hermocrates in Syracuse was high enough for the Syracusans to refuse to recall him even after he had piously collected and returned the bones of the Syracusan dead killed in a recent action against the Carthaginians (Diod. Sic. 75.2-5). Diodorus explains that the reason for this was that the Syracusans were afraid that Hermocrates might become a tyrant if allowed to return (Diod. Sic. 13.75.5).

period. Jason, Dionysius I and Dionysius II were well known in antiquity for employing unusually large numbers of mercenaries. By the Classical period the *epikouroi* of the Homeric and Archaic periods, soldiers connected to the tyrant through various social practices and rewarded for their assistance with food and plunder, appear to have been eclipsed or at least marginalised by the use of mercenaries who fought for pay and profit. However, the uses to which these troops were put, such as conquest, raiding and intimidation, did not deviate from the uses of the Archaic *epikouroi*. The armies of Classical tyrants certainly increased in scale from their Archaic predecessors but, as we shall see, the manner in which they employed these troops did not change. 4) A new set of challenges arises regarding the source material. Unlike many of the sources for Archaic tyranny, some of the material pertinent to Classical tyranny is contemporary.<sup>453</sup> The problems lie not so much in anachronisms and chronological distance or even in the hostility of the sources to tyranny, this last point being generally universal in Greek sources. Rather, the issue with the sources on Classical tyranny, whether they are Classical or post-Classical, is their insistence on forcing tyrants and their actions into predesigned moulds that suit the intentions of the authors of each particular text. This will become apparent when dealing with several of Xenophon's works and the philosophical texts, for example, where this habit is particularly acute. The nature of these texts remains one of the greatest barriers to understanding the Classical tyrants, but they do not describe a change in the methods employed by tyrants to take power.

The sources on the Classical tyrants suffer from the, often extreme, prejudice of their authors towards tyrants and tyranny in general. Many stereotype the tyrant's

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<sup>453</sup> Lewis (2009) 60.

personality and record numerous lurid stories of the tyrant's excesses, violence, and sexual deviancy.<sup>454</sup> Xenophon's Hieron explains that the tyrant partakes in too much eating, sex and luxury (Xen. *Hieron.* 1.21-23, 29-38, 2.1-2). Likewise Aristotle made the claim that the goal of tyranny was to pursue pleasure rather than virtue (Arist. *Pol.* 1311a). One of the best articulated descriptions of the features of tyranny was written by Herodotus. In his Persian constitutional debate Otanes complains that monarchical rulers overthrow the laws, force themselves on women and kill men without trial (Hdt. 3.80). Herodotus repeats the last feature when he describes how Periander killed many Corinthians without trial (Hdt. 5.92g). Diodorus, making use of a source more hostile to Clearchus than Xenophon, describes Clearchus the Lacedaemonian as a tyrant and notes that he put wealthy Byzantines to death without trial in order to steal their property (Diod. Sic. 14.12.9). The expectation that a tyrant would be violent and abusive towards his subjects was voiced by Solon more than a century earlier (Solon. 32.1-4 [West]). While remaining staunchly hostile to tyranny as a phenomenon, not one of these sources were concerned with recording the daily workings of the tyrant's rule and few were concerned with recording the events surrounding a tyrant's rise to power in any great detail. The sources on the tyrant's accession and life paradoxically tend to take the form of frustratingly general statements or of curious anecdotes, some of which read like mere slander. This leaves enormous gaps in our knowledge of Classical tyrannical rule, particularly in mundane but significant areas such as day-to-day administration, finances and the administration of justice. The sources focus heavily on the moral degradation of the

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<sup>454</sup> Luraghi (1994) 33-34, suggests, regarding Phalaris, that the image of the tyrant constructed by the sources may not represent reality. Luraghi correctly points out the problems inherent in the historical tradition regarding tyrants, particularly the tendency of the sources to exaggerate or belittle features of the tyrant's rule.

tyrant, forcing the tyrant's personality and actions into a predesigned mould to better illustrate the moral lesson the author wished to impart.

A further problem is presented by the fact that, by the Classical period, the word 'tyrant' had become a label and an accusation to be used against one's political enemies and against rulers that the writers of the sources disapproved of.<sup>455</sup> It is quite possible that several individuals that are listed among the tyrants by modern scholars did not consider themselves, and were not considered by their supporters, to be tyrants. Jason's assumption of the office of *tagos* was done by the laws of the Thessalians, and it is through the account of Xenophon that we know Jason of Pherae as a 'tyrant', although Xenophon never calls Jason 'tyrant of Pherae'. It is therefore necessary to be cautious when approaching certain texts, on the understanding that the tyrant in question might not in reality be a sole ruler, but an object of disapproval and derision for the author of that particular text.<sup>456</sup>

#### *a) Warfare*

The strong links between Classical tyrants such as Dionysius I and Jason of Pherae<sup>457</sup> with soldiering and military success have led one scholar to refer to some

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<sup>455</sup> Thucydides records that Alcibiades' lifestyle offended some Athenians to the extent that they expressed the concern he might have been aiming at a tyranny. While this may have been Alcibiades' political opponents using the fear of tyranny to discredit him, Thucydides states that the Athenians put their public affairs into the hands of others as a consequence (Thuc. 6.15). Thucydides has Alcibiades himself claim that his family were hostile to tyranny, using this political stance as a method of ingratiating himself with the Spartans (Thuc. 6.89).

<sup>456</sup> Note, for example, Xenophon's apparently ambivalent attitude towards Jason of Pherae. This is summarised by Sprawski (1999) 10: 'Xenophon endows him, to be sure, with certain characteristics of the ideal leader, and even calls him the greatest man of his times, but he clearly emphasizes that Jason's goal was not to bring peace, but rather to win glory for himself. Jason thus constitutes a great threat, since he is gifted with many virtues, but his fundamental stance is immoral.'

<sup>457</sup> Jason is called tyrant by Xenophon, Diodorus (Diod. Sic. 15.57.2, 15.60.1), and Polyaeus (Polyaeus. *Strategemata*. 3.9.40). Note the comments of Sprawski (1999) 60, regarding the ambiguities and difficulties in establishing Jason's position in Thessaly: 'Given the assumption that Jason was tyrant of Pherae and that it was from this position that he attempted to impose his authority over all of Thessaly, the term "tyranny" cannot in fact be used of his power in Thessaly. It is accepted

Classical tyrannies as effectively ‘military monarchy’.<sup>458</sup> Another scholar referred to Classical tyrants as ‘military adventurers’.<sup>459</sup> These links take the form of successful military leadership, hiring of mercenaries, military support from friends and family, conquest, personal participation in combat and the presence of military themed anecdotes in the sources. These instances vary in scope, from Dionysius I controlling large fleets and leading tens of thousands of soldiers,<sup>460</sup> to Evagoras setting out to become a tyrant and storming Salamis in a surprise night attack with a handful of followers (Isoc. 9.28-32). Military command remained a method by which Greek officers could attempt to seize tyrannical power.<sup>461</sup> The murderers of Jason of Pherae were honoured in several Greek cities because, as Xenophon records, there was a belief at the time that Jason, who had recently been made *tagos*, would soon become a tyrant (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.32).<sup>462</sup> One of the speeches of Demosthenes makes the bold but generally correct claim that all *basileis* and *dynastai* are strong when they

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that he succeeded, after the country had been united, in arranging his election to the office of *tagos*, the head of the Thessalian *koinon*, in a manner consistent with tradition.’ Sprawski (2004) 438, notes that only one source, Diodorus, calls Jason the ‘tyrant of Pherae’, and Xenophon writes that Jason was from Pherae, but does not call him tyrant *of* Pherae (Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.4). There was clearly some ambiguity regarding Jason’s status and position, official or otherwise, in ancient times and even his contemporary Xenophon was not particularly decisive in his description of him. This ambiguity, between tyranny and legitimate but powerful office, is also found in the much earlier example of Pittakos. Pittakos, called a tyrant by Archilochus (Archil. 348 [West]), was categorised as an *aisymnetes* by Aristotle (Arist. *Pol.* 1285a29).

<sup>458</sup> Andrewes (1956) 128.

<sup>459</sup> Westlake (1952) 12-13. The appearance of some Classical tyrants as mere warlords at the head of mercenary armies may be a product of the scarcity of source material and the focus of what material does survive, rather than the reality. While it is true that the poorly documented and less well known tyrants such as Hicetas and Mamercus generally feature in the surviving sources as soldiers and leaders of mercenaries (e.g. Diod. Sic. 16.68.1-3, 9; Nep. *Timoleon.* 2), better documented tyrants such as Dionysius I, Evagoras of Salamis and Jason of Pherae appear as far more complex rulers, who constructed their power on a diverse set of methods and practices. It is difficult to accept this as a coincidence. It is more likely that, because the lesser known tyrants acted as foils and contrasts in the literary sources for heroic figures such as Timoleon, or as players in wider historical events, they naturally appear at the head of armies or in military situations. On Hicetas and Mamercus see Talbert (1974) 87-97, 110-113.

<sup>460</sup> Plutarch claimed that Dionysius’ son and successor, Dionysius II, had at his disposal ten thousand bodyguards, four hundred triremes and ten thousand cavalry (Plutarch uses the word *myrios*, which could mean ‘countless’ or ‘ten thousand’), as well as ‘many’ hoplites (Plut. *Dion.* 14). While Plutarch is possibly exaggerating to magnify Dion’s, and subsequently Timoleon’s, achievements in overthrowing the tyranny, the resources of Syracuse and her subjects were probably extensive.

<sup>461</sup> Harris (2015) 85-86.

<sup>462</sup> Xenophon’s comment is also interesting because it implies that Jason was not considered, at least by some contemporaries, to have actually been a tyrant at the point of his death.

succeed militarily (Dem. 11.14).<sup>463</sup> This was certainly true for the Homeric *basileis* who enjoyed large windfalls of movable wealth and upward social mobility through successful raids and through military success in general. In Xenophon's *Hieron* the author has Hieron explain that while private citizens desire mundane, easily acquired things, the tyrant desires '*poleis*, much land, harbours or strong acropolises' (Xen. *Hieron*. 4.7). While Xenophon is constructing a moral image of the tyrant as jaded and driven by insatiable desires, the objects of the tyrant's desire have, in this passage, a general military theme. Xenophon, like Demosthenes, recognised a link between tyrants and military ambition. The positions of Classical tyrants were strengthened by military success and were undermined by defeat. Warfare was a means by which Classical tyrants could maintain their power by enlarging their

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<sup>463</sup> Some of the most obvious examples of sources associating Classical tyrants with military activity are found in Demosthenes' speeches concerning Philip and his son Alexander. For the purposes of this thesis the Macedonian rulers, including Philip and Alexander the Great, are considered to be tyrants. They are not discussed in the body of the thesis because of constraints of space but also because they were an ostensibly Greek family ruling over barbarians. Furthermore, the manner in which Macedonian rulers came to power differs from that of Greek tyrants. A paper by Errington (1978) made a convincing argument against the notion of a Macedonian assembly with defined legal rights 'acclaiming' the king. Instead, Errington suggested dynastic succession approved by a formal or informal council of nobles. The issue is further complicated by Errington's contention that the conspicuous assumption of the royal title *basileus* only occurred *after* Alexander's death as the Successors fought among themselves. On the succession in Macedonia cf. Hatzopoulos (1996) 303-312. These issues make the Macedonian rulers a unique phenomenon which would require a separate study. However, examples of their behaviour relevant to the argument will be mentioned in the footnotes.

Regarding the identification of the Macedonian rulers as tyrants, they and their predecessors are called tyrants by several Greek sources and their behaviour matches exactly with the pattern of tyrannical behaviour established in the previous chapters. On several occasions Herodotus calls the kings of Macedon tyrants. He records a tale which explains how a certain Alexander took the *turannis* of Macedon (Hdt. 8.137). This Alexander is later called a tyrant by the Spartan envoys (Hdt. 8.142). Although Demosthenes calls Philip and other kings of Macedon *basileus* (Dem. 6.20, 25; 7.11), the speeches of Demosthenes are particularly firm in their accusation that Philip and Alexander were tyrants. They characterise the behaviour of the Macedonian kings as typically tyrannical, citing the same characteristics of violence and injustice already attributed to tyrants by Theognis and Solon (Dem. 10.10). Demosthenes readily accused Alexander of using force to work his will on the Greek states (Dem. 17.16). Demosthenes also called Philip a tyrant or implied he was a tyrant on a number of occasions. Speaking on Philip's relations with the Olynthians, Demosthenes states that close intercourse with tyrants undermines even good constitutions (Dem. 6.21). In the same speech Demosthenes explains that Philip's appellations, *basileus* and *turannos*, are incompatible with freedom (Dem. 6.25). Demosthenes also claimed that the Thessalians viewed Philip as a *despotes* (Dem. 11.4). Elsewhere Demosthenes explicitly associates the establishment of tyrannies and 'dynasties' with the rise of Philip in Greece (Dem. 10.4, 8). Another speech claims Alexander restored tyrants to Messene, stating that this behaviour was obviously *turannikos* (Dem. 17.4).

territory by conquest, distributing booty and enabling them to justify their pre-eminent position to the community through victory. We shall see that there was no difference between the military activities of the Classical tyrants and those of their Archaic predecessors.

The popularity to be gained from personal success in war remained an important feature of tyranny after the end of the Archaic period.<sup>464</sup> Gelon, before he died in 478, was said to have brought *eunomia* (good order) and *euporia* (plenty or abundance) to Sicily by defeating the Carthaginians (Diod. Sic. 11.38.1). Despite the fact that Diodorus' claim that Gelon was hailed as 'saviour, benefactor and *basileus*' (εὐεργέτην καὶ σωτῆρα καὶ βασιλέα) by the Syracusan assembly sounds suspiciously like the titles given to Hellenistic kings (Diod. Sic. 11.26.5-6), it should be remembered that tyrants carefully cultivated popular support and an appearance before the assembled citizens finds precedent in the behaviour of Pisistratus and his family. Plutarch also records the existence of a strong favourable tradition in Sicily regarding Gelon (Plut. *Dion.* 5). The positive tradition surrounding Gelon appears to have been born from his military successes against Carthage. One of Isocrates' speeches praises Dionysius I for delivering Syracuse from danger and making it one of the greatest of the Greek cities through his leadership in war (Isoc. 3.23).<sup>465</sup> Pindar celebrated Hieron's victories over the Etruscans and Carthaginians (*Pyth.* 1.71-73). Pindar also praised Hieron for protecting Locris from war with his power (*dynamis*) (*Pyth.* 2.20). Xenophon wrote in terms approaching admiration for the military

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<sup>464</sup> This was true not only for tyrants but also for other individuals and groups who wished to bring about a change of government. After the battle of Mantinea a faction which Aristotle calls the *gnōrimoi*, having gained reputation during the battle, subsequently rose against the democracy (Arist. *Pol.* 1304a).

<sup>465</sup> De Angelis (2016) 215, notes that Dionysius I not only secured resources through territorial conquest but reaffirmed his status as the ruler of Syracuse.

activities and lifestyle of Jason of Pherae, such as his meritocratic approach to awards for soldiers, personal bravery and practice of leading by example (Xen. *Hell.* 6.1.5-6).<sup>466</sup> Isocrates also used a theme of military ambition and conquest to praise Evagoras of Salamis, who ruled from c.411-374.<sup>467</sup> Isocrates describes how Evagoras had acquired territory and built triremes and walls (Isoc. 9.47).<sup>468</sup> Isocrates claimed that Evagoras not only conquered Cyprus but plundered Phoenicia and captured the city of Tyre (Isoc. 9.62).<sup>469</sup> Evagoras' conquests were probably substantial, as Diodorus also recorded that Evagoras subdued some of the cities of Cyprus by force (*bia*) (Diod. Sic. 14.98.2), and succeeded in conquering almost the entire island (Diod. Sic. 14.110.5). Alexander of Pherae also successfully fended off at least one major expedition sent against him by Thebes at the height of her power. Diodorus even describes Alexander personally leading an aggressive pursuit of the defeated Theban army (Diod. Sic. 15.71.4-6; Plut. *Pel.* 29.1), also noting that Alexander was militarily successful against the Thessalian communities that opposed him (Diod. Sic. 15.80.1).

Although Hermocrates of Syracuse never became a tyrant, and it is debatable whether he ever intended to,<sup>470</sup> Diodorus records that the Syracusans were at least

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<sup>466</sup> On the sources for Jason see Sprawski (1999) 9-14.

<sup>467</sup> Costa (1974) 42, puts a *terminus ante quem* for Evagoras' seizure of power at 410.

<sup>468</sup> Isocrates' speeches, despite being highly favourable to Evagoras, explicitly states that Evagoras was a tyrant. Isocrates compared Evagoras to others who had been exiled from a tyranny (οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι, κἂν ἐκ τυραννίδος ἐκπέσωσι) (Isoc. 9.27). The same speech describes Evagoras returning from exile to be a tyrant (τυραννεῖν) (Isoc. 9.28), and upon succeeding actually becoming tyrant (Isoc. 9.32). Isocrates even praises Evagoras from rising from the status of a private citizen to the position of tyrant (Isoc. 9.66). Diodorus refers to Evagoras as *basileus* (Diod. Sic. 14.39.1; 14.98.1).

<sup>469</sup> After conquering Tyre, Evagoras may have compelled his new Phoenician subjects to provide him with warships as Diodorus mentions twenty Tyrian triremes serving in Evagoras' fleet (Diod. 15.2.4).

<sup>470</sup> Parke (1933) 63, considered Hermocrates' attempt to return to Syracuse in 407 to be an attempt at tyranny.



afraid that he might make the attempt (Diod. Sic. 13.75.5).<sup>471</sup> In this context, Hermocrates' actions upon returning to Sicily after being exiled show the significance of military success for one's popularity, and therefore remain relevant when discussing tyranny. Rather than pursue a war against the opposing party in Syracuse, Hermocrates used his mercenaries to wage a private war against the Carthaginian territories in Sicily. In this he was very successful. Just as Gelon had done about seventy years before, Hermocrates collected large amounts of booty and earned for himself the praise of the Sicilian Greeks. His successes against Carthage were impressive enough to convince the majority of the Syracusans to regret his exile and seriously consider recalling him (Diod. Sic. 13.63.2-6). Despite the fact that Hermocrates was not a tyrant Diodorus' account very neatly illustrates the effectiveness of military success in securing popular support in the *polis* for influential individuals, particularly when discussed in relation to Gelon's example.

The instances where tyrants were defeated illustrate the importance of military success by highlighting the consequences of its absence. Thrasydaeus, tyrant of Acragas and Himera, was defeated in battle by Hieron, and consequently fled to Nisaeon Megara where he was put to death (Diod. Sic. 11.53.4-5). Dionysius' failure to defeat the Carthaginians outside Gela in 405 created an immediate threat to his rule. Dionysius' defeat resulted in not only resentment against him from the Syracusans, but also a determined, if poorly organised, revolt against him by the Syracusan cavalry. The horsemen ransacked Dionysius' house and abused his wife to

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<sup>471</sup> As leader of the allied Greeks against Persia, Pausanias had also been accused of tyrannical ambitions in 478, and was subsequently tried and replaced with another Spartan officer (Thuc. 1.95). Westlake (1958-59) 240, takes the view that: 'They [the Sicilian Greeks] produced few great leaders who were not tyrants because they were seldom willing to accept unpalatable advice.' The Syracusans experienced a number of tyrannies and attempts at creating tyranny in the fifth century. Westlake's view does not take into account this context, and unfairly brands the Sicilian Greeks as incompetent, when the evidence suggests that they were justifiably wary of powerful and successful men.

such an extent that she committed suicide (Diod. Sic. 13.112). Arriving shortly after the cavalry, Dionysius was compelled to retake the city by force, killing or driving out those who had revolted against him (Diod. Sic. 13.113). Xenophon also mentions the revolt, although he records that it was the people of Leontini who, in the aftermath of Dionysius' defeat, took the opportunity to revolt from Dionysius and left Syracuse to return to their own territory (Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.5). Military defeat shook Dionysius' grip on power and caused serious insurrections against his rule.

By providing military assistance to other communities tyrants also enhanced their popularity abroad. Diodorus records an incident in which the Sybarites requested Hieron's aid against Croton (Diod. Sic. 11.48.4). Diodorus also records a second incident in which the Himerans approached Hieron, offering him their city to rule if he would assist them in attacking their overbearing and unpopular tyrant, Thrasydaeus (Diod. Sic. 11.48.7). In 474 Hieron was also approached by ambassadors from Cumae who requested his aid against the Etruscans, against whom he subsequently won his famous victory (Diod. Sic. 11.51). Gelon, by virtue of his military power, was also approached by the mainland Greeks for aid against Persia (Hdt. 7.145). Clearchus the Lacedaemonian, called a tyrant by Diodorus (Diod. Sic. 14.12.9), received gifts of money to support his soldiers from the Greeks of the Hellespont, as he was making war on the neighbouring Thracians (Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.9). Alexander of Pherae may have received certain honours at Athens, including a bronze statue (Plut. *Pel.* 31).<sup>472</sup> A speech of Demosthenes notes that Alexander of Pherae had received armed support from Athens because of his bitter opposition to Thebes which at the time coincided with the interests of Athens (Dem. 23.120).

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<sup>472</sup> Plutarch belittles the award of the bronze statue by implying that the Athenians only put it up because they were taking Alexander's money.

According to Isocrates and Pausanias, Evagoras of Salamis received a statue at Athens in gratitude for the arms with which he had supplied the Athenian fleet shortly before the battle of Cnidus (Isoc. 9.56-57; Paus. 1.3.2). Evagoras also received citizenship at Athens. Isocrates states this was ‘because of many and great benefactions’ (Isoc. 9.54) to Athens.<sup>473</sup> A very badly damaged inscription from 410/9 also honours Evagoras for services to Athens (*IG* I<sup>3</sup> 113), although this may have been in gratitude for mediation on behalf of the Athenians rather than for Evagoras’ military aid.<sup>474</sup> The Geloans regarded Dionysius, at least for a time, as a liberator and when they were threatened by Carthage turned to him for military aid. By presenting himself as their military protector Dionysius not only won the goodwill of the *polis* of Gela but returned to Syracuse with an excuse to be placed in command of an even larger body of troops (Diod. Sic. 13.93.5). Dionysius I also provided military assistance to the Spartans in mainland Greece (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.20-22, 28), subsequently receiving honours from the Athenians, discussed below, who attempted to detach him from the Spartan alliance.

Jason had access to the military resources of Thessaly through his occupation of the office of *tagos*. Sprawski points out that Xenophon only really uses the word *tagos* in a military context which gives very little indication of the extent of its civil or judicial powers,<sup>475</sup> although Jason was able to set and collect tribute from neighbouring or subject peoples (Xen. *Hell.* 1.12, 19). It does however give a good

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<sup>473</sup> It is unclear whether the Evagoras mentioned in Dem. 12.10 is the same individual who ruled Salamis from c.411-374. The Evagoras described by Demosthenes was expelled from the city, whereas the elder Evagoras was probably murdered (Arist. *Pol.* 1311b; Diod. Sic. 15.47.8).

<sup>474</sup> Costa (1974) 46.

<sup>475</sup> Larsen (1968) 15, suggested that the office of *tagos* was in fact an appointment for life. On the word *tagos* itself see Sprawski (1999) 16-17. There seems to have been some uncertainty in (or merely lack of interest in accurately defining) the exact nature of the ruler of Thessaly. Pindar uses the verb βασιλεύω to describe the men who ruled Thessaly (Pindar. *Pyth.* 10), and both Herodotus and Thucydides refer to the leader of the Thessalians as *basileus* (Hdt. 5.63; Thuc. 1.111).

view of the extent of Jason's military power. This gave Jason the power to assemble the various contingents provided by the cities of Thessaly, to lead them on campaign (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.30), and possibly to use common funds to supplement the considerable manpower of Thessaly with large numbers of mercenaries (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.28).

Using military office as a stepping-stone to tyranny was a tactic employed by a number of Greeks in the Classical period. Dionysius I used his position as *strategos autokrator* to become tyrant of Syracuse through his control of military resources (Diod. Sic. 13.95.1).<sup>476</sup> Dionysius would use the army to violently suppress the revolt of the cavalry after being defeated by the Carthaginians outside Gela in 405 (Diod. Sic. 13.112.4-13.113.4). Despite the defeat at Gela, it is worth noting that, with the exception of some of the cavalry, Dionysius maintained control over the army at an extremely traumatic time; extricating it from the battlefield, returning it to Syracuse and using elements of it to crush the revolt. This suggests that either the office of *strategos autokrator* gave Dionysius enough control over the army to keep it firmly in hand or that Dionysius was popular enough with the army to maintain their loyalty during a civil war. The Phocian tyrants based their power on their occupation of the elected office of *strategos autokrator*. The Phocians nominated Philomelos for the office (Diod. Sic. 16.24.1), and after his death Onomarchus was elected to the same office (Diod. Sic. 16.32.4). Upon the death of

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<sup>476</sup> It is unlikely that Diodorus' statement that Dionysius declared himself tyrant is true. See Caven (1990) 58: 'but I doubt if he put it quite as crudely as that. He may very well have issued a proclamation (like that of Peisistratus, after his final seizure of power) that he took upon himself in the present crisis the direction of all public business; but if he did, his position was still constitutional, even though it must have become clear to everyone that, if he called upon his bodyguard and the mercenaries to support him, it would take a civil war to depose him.' Given the universal Greek hostility to outright tyranny Caven is surely right to criticise Diodorus' account. In this he is also supported by Mitchell (2013) 131.

Onomarchus his brother Phayllus, called a *dynastes* by Demosthenes (Dem. 23.124), also became *strategos autokrator*. In Thessaly the office of *tagos* was used by several individuals who may already have been recognised as tyrants, such as Jason and Alexander of Pherae, before they took the office.<sup>477</sup> Sprawski points out that Xenophon only uses the word *tagos* in a military context which gives very little indication of the extent of its civil or judicial powers.<sup>478</sup> It does however give a good view of the extent of Jason's military power. This gave Jason the power to assemble the various contingents provided by the cities of Thessaly, to lead them on campaign (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.30), and possibly to use common funds to supplement the considerable manpower of Thessaly with large numbers of mercenaries (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.28). If this is accurate, then legitimate or traditional offices may have been a way for existing tyrants to extend their powers over wider territories and gain access to their resources without the need for outright military conquest. Euphron of Sicyon had himself elected *strategos* with a number of others to form a board of generals in Sicyon and had his own son appointed to lead Sicyon's mercenary soldiers (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.45).<sup>479</sup> It is remarkable that, given Euphron's obvious popularity in Sicyon and the unsettling presence of his Arcadian and Argive allies in the very agora, the Sicyonians still avoided giving Euphron the sole command. Instead they appointed a board of generals within which Euphron was merely one member. It is clear that, whatever Euphron's intentions regarding Sicyon, the citizens were unprepared to create a tyrant, regardless of Euphron's popularity. Xenophon, a source deeply

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<sup>477</sup> Demosthenes explained that Philip had been profiting from the collection of taxes from Thessalian ports and markets (Dem. 1.22). Demosthenes, who elsewhere depicts Philip as a tyrant, claimed that this money was going to pay Philip's mercenaries. This is an interesting passage because, if accurate, it suggests that Philip deliberately rejected the opportunity to demand direct tribute from a subdued people in favour of the adoption of the established methods of revenue collection.

<sup>478</sup> On the word *tagos* see Sprawski (1999) 16-17.

<sup>479</sup> Griffin (1982) 70, believes Euphron to have originally been a member of the pro-Spartan 'oligarchy'. If this is accurate then Euphron's motives become more opportunistic than ideologically or class motivated.

hostile to Euphron, states that Euphron had his colleagues in the government murdered (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.46). Unfortunately he is not clear as to who exactly was killed, although the position of this comment suggests that it was Euphron's colleagues on the board of generals who were removed. Timophanes of Corinth may have used his command of the city's mercenaries as the foundation for his attempt at tyranny (Arist. *Pol.* 5.1306a; Plut. *Timol.* 4). Plutarch also noted that Timophanes was an experienced soldier and highly regarded in Corinth as an army officer (Plut. *Timol.* 4). All of these individuals used their offices and control over the military to extend their power and remove their rivals and opponents. It is for this reason that the Greeks of the Classical period were so careful to place legal constraints on army officers. The possibility of tyranny arising out of military authority was a very real threat and the severe penalties for overstepping one's legal authority or illegally extending the duration of one's command reflect this.<sup>480</sup>

Personal military leadership also remained important to Classical tyrants. Personal participation in combat and conspicuous leadership played a key role in establishing the power of their Homeric and Archaic predecessors. Dionysius almost certainly had some experience of combat and military life before becoming *strategos autokrator*, possibly while he was a supporter of Hermocrates. Diodorus writes that Dionysius had actually been with Hermocrates when he and his supporters were all but wiped out in a violent civil conflict that culminated in a battle in the heart of the city of Syracuse. Dionysius himself somehow managed to escape the ensuing

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<sup>480</sup> The trial of Epaminondas and Pelopidas, who had illegally extended the duration of their commands in the Peloponnese, was well known in antiquity (Plut. *Pel.* 24-25; Paus. 9.14.5-7; Nep. *Epaminondas.* 7-8).

massacre (Diod. Sic. 13.75.8-9).<sup>481</sup> Jason of Pherae led his troops in person and inspired them by his example (Xen. *Hell.* 6.1.6) Xenophon also wrote that Euphron's allies, presumably the Arcadians and Argives, acquiesced in Euphron's murderous behaviour partly because he readily led the Sicyonian mercenaries on expeditions on behalf of his allies. Xenophon states that Euphron led these troops in person, and that he earned the trust of his allies by eagerly (πρόθυμος) leading these mercenaries to aid them (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.46). Euphron's personal leadership and obviously close relationship with these troops enabled him to operate in Sicyon without the immediate interference of his allies and, as Xenophon states, to gain the support of the mercenaries in the city's employ.<sup>482</sup>

As well as exercising control over the soldiers and military institutions of the *polis* the tyrants also employed violence against dissidents and potential rivals. Dionysius I suppressed several revolts violently (Diod. Sic. 13.113; 14.9.5), although in the early years of his rule he used the assembly to put his enemies to death with at least a semblance of legality (Diod. Sic. 13.96.3). Xenophon describes how Lycophron established his supremacy in Thessaly by defeating his enemies in battle. 'It was about this time...that Lycophron of Pherae, who was ambitious to gain control over the whole of Thessaly, defeated in battle those Thessalians (the people of Larissa and others) who opposed him and killed large numbers of them.' (Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.4).<sup>483</sup> Plutarch claimed that Timophanes put a number of Corinth's leading

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<sup>481</sup> Sanders (1991) 282, believes that Dionysius had served under Hermocrates during the Deceleian War, although his evidence from Diodorus is not explicit about this connection.

<sup>482</sup> The Macedonian kings appeared before the assembled Macedonians (Diod. Sic. 17.2.2; Justin. 11.1.7-10) and led the army, linking the kingship closely with military leadership. Lock (1977) 91-98, argued convincingly against the notion of the Macedonian kingship as a 'constitutional' monarchy, characterising it as a personal form of rule without established legal rights and obligations, not dissimilar to the form of rule practised by the Homeric *basileis* and the Greek tyrants.

<sup>483</sup> Lycophron is called a tyrant by Diodorus (Diod. Sic. 14.82.5).

citizens to death when he became tyrant (Plut. *Timol.* 4).<sup>484</sup> After the murder of Jason his brother Polydorus and Polyphron succeeded to the office of *tagos*. Xenophon records a popularly held belief at the time that Polyphron murdered Polydorus in his sleep. Xenophon goes on to state that Polyphron made the office of *tagos* like a tyranny by murdering the best citizens in Pharsalus and exiled more from Larisa (Xen. *Hell.* 6.34).<sup>485</sup> Philomelos, called a tyrant by Polyaeus (Polyaeus. *Strategemata*. 5.45),<sup>486</sup> destroyed the pro-Amphictyonic family of the Thracidae after he seized Delphi (Diod. Sic. 16.24.3). When Onomarchus succeeded him as *strategos autokrator* he had the Phocians who opposed him executed and their property confiscated (Diod. Sic. 16.33.3)

Military success continued to be a route to securing large amounts of moveable wealth in the form of slaves, treasure items, goods and other property.<sup>487</sup> Diodorus records that Dionysius I attempted to stop the massacre of the Motyans after the capture of their city because he wanted to sell the inhabitants for money

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<sup>484</sup> This is, however, contradicted by Diodorus, who wrote that Timophanes, although he was practising some of the behaviour of tyrants, was pre-emptively killed before he could make himself tyrant of Corinth (Diod. Sic. 16.65.3-4).

<sup>485</sup> The early days of Alexander's accession provide some stark examples of the need for force in the vulnerable, early moments of a tyrant's rule. Alexander's friends rallied to him and took control of his father's palace (Arr. *Anab.* 1.25.2). There were a number of rivals or merely troublesome or untrustworthy neighbours that were dealt with harshly during Alexander's accession. These included the relatives of Attalus and the members of the house of Lyncestis. Alexander's destruction of his rivals was steady and effective. The son of Perdiccas, Amyntas, was killed. Alexander intended to arrest or kill Attalus, a more difficult task as Attalus was based in Asia Minor at the time. Alexander also exterminated Attalus' relatives. There is also mention of another half-brother of Alexander in Justin who was also murdered, but this cannot be checked against any other source, being mentioned solely by Justin.

<sup>486</sup> Aeschines also refers to the leaders of the Phocians as tyrants (Aesch. 2.131). Pausanias calls them *dynastai* (Paus. 4.5.4).

<sup>487</sup> Harris (2015) 87: 'Another measure to prevent tyranny was to forbid the king or other commander from distributing booty to his troops after a victory. This generosity might boost morale and reward good service, but it threatened to create a personal bond between the king and his troops, who might become more loyal to him than to the community. As a result, all booty was handed over to special officials, who were responsible for selling it and making sure that the proceeds were paid into the public treasury (Xen. *Hell.* IV, 1, 26-28).'



(Diod. Sic. 14.53.2). After the capture of Motya Dionysius' army looted the city and collected large amounts of silver, gold and clothing. Diodorus wrote that Dionysius allowed his men to loot the city in order to encourage them to future conquests (Diod. Sic. 14.53.3). After defeating the Carthaginian mercenaries outside Syracuse Dionysius gave their baggage over to his soldiers to plunder for themselves (Diod. Sic. 14.75.9). Other tyrants such as Jason completely destroyed *poleis* that opposed them or pre-emptively destroyed cities that might in future cause them problems, as Jason did to the Hyampolitans and to the city of Heracleia (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.27). It is often unclear in the sources as to what happened to the moveable wealth of these cities, but it is hard to believe that it was not carried off by the conqueror. The treacherous destruction of Scotoussa by Alexander of Pherae is mentioned by several sources. While Plutarch only notes that the city was destroyed and Diodorus claimed that Alexander looted the city, Pausanias wrote that Alexander sold the women and children specifically to pay his mercenaries.<sup>488</sup> Probably in 361/360, Alexander raided some of the islands of the Cyclades, including Tenos. A speech of Demosthenes states that Alexander landed on Tenos and enslaved the inhabitants (Dem. 50.4). Diodorus states that Alexander sent 'pirate ships' on this expedition, implying that it was a raid for booty rather than a manoeuvre of any strategic significance.<sup>489</sup> Polyaeus wrote that Alexander actually raided the Piraeus itself (Polyaeus. *Strategemata.* 6.2). Although we should not overestimate the value of plunder to Classical tyrants, it appears to have been a short-term method of paying their soldiers and encouraged them to continue fighting in the hope of further

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<sup>488</sup> Diod. Sic. 15.75.1; Plut. *Pel.* 29; Paus. 6.5.2. Westlake (1969) 145, points out that Alexander needed funds to pay the garrisons he maintained over the Achaeans of Phthiotis and in Magnesia. See Plut. *Pel.* 31.

<sup>489</sup> ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων Ἀλέξανδρος μὲν ὁ Φερῶν τύραννος ληστρίδας ναῦς ἐκπέμψας ἐπὶ τὰς Κυκλάδας νήσους (Diod. Sic. 15.95.1-2).

opportunities to acquire loot. Gathering booty and redistributing also increased the popularity of military leaders within the army and in the *polis* itself.

*b) Mercenaries*

The tyrants' use of soldiers recognisably mercenary in nature seems to be well attested in this period.<sup>490</sup> While this thesis has shown that significant numbers of mercenaries did not play any major role in Archaic tyranny, by the late fifth century recognisably mercenary forces were available for hire by *poleis* or tyrants.<sup>491</sup> By this time Thucydides was able to write of the auxiliary forces accompanying the Sicilian expedition that the Argives would fight against other Dorians because of the *ophelia* (self-interest, benefit) of each Argive; that the Mantineans and other Arcadian *misthophoroi* would fight other Arcadians through their *kerdos* (greed, desire for profit); and that Cretans and Aetolians served for a *misthos*, with the Cretans ultimately fighting against their own colonists at Gela in return for that *misthos* (Thuc. 7.57.9). These troops were clearly mercenaries; soldiers fighting in another's war in return for pay. While Thucydides seems to have had an interest in documenting the decline of social norms and general degradation caused by extended periods of warfare, there is no reason to disbelieve Thucydides' description

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<sup>490</sup> Mossé (1969) 96-98, cites the rise of mercenary armies as a major development of the fourth century, although the practice probably began in the fifth. As noted in the third chapter, there are references to Archaic and early Classical tyrants making use of mercenaries, but these are only found in Classical or post-Classical sources and are almost certainly anachronistic. These sources have, however, led to a number of scholars assuming that the tyrants of the late sixth and early fifth centuries used mercenaries in the same manner and quantity as their fourth century counterparts. Dunbabin (1948) 410, for example, assumes that Gelon was supported by Hippocrates' mercenaries against the citizen-soldiers of free *poleis*. There is absolutely no contemporary or near-contemporary evidence for this.

<sup>491</sup> The quality of the mercenaries employed by tyrants is debatable. Westlake (1969) 147, for example, stated that by 364, the Thessalian League 'was still no match for the trained mercenaries of Alexander'. While it is tempting to view these soldiers, who were arguably semi-professional, as superior to citizen militias, and therefore a military advantage to tyrants, this view should not be accepted out of hand. An answer to the question would require a survey of the nature of tyrant-led forces and their levels of military success. Polybius is one of the few ancient sources that addresses this issue directly, claiming that the tyrant's mercenaries were more efficient than citizen militias (Polyb. 11.13).

of the mercenary contingents in 416/415. Thucydides also states, in a rare but valuable mention of a late fifth-century tyrant, how the exiled tyrant Evarchus of Astacus returned to power in 431 through the help of the Corinthians, and by hiring mercenaries himself (καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπικούρους τινὰς προσεμισθώσατο) (Thuc. 2.30, 33).<sup>492</sup> In the fourth century Aristotle claimed that states relied on citizens for their defence, while the tyrant relied on mercenaries to defend him from the citizens (Arist. *Pol.* 1285a, 1311a). This view was tied to Aristotle's contention that the tyrant's rule was inherently oppressive and consequently unpopular with the citizens. Before accepting Aristotle's assessment, one should note the perceptive comments of Lewis regarding Euphron of Sicyon. 'What Xenophon does not say is that Euphron used the mercenaries against his own citizens, to enforce an unpopular rule nor that he brought the force into being: he clearly took it over from the previous regime.'<sup>493</sup> Aristotle took a similar view with oligarchies, claiming that, as they could not rely on the *demos*, they employed mercenaries whose commander inevitably became a tyrant, citing the example of Timophanes of Corinth (Arist. *Pol.* 5.1306a).<sup>494</sup> Plutarch records the same incident, writing that Timophanes was appointed by the Corinthians to command the city's four hundred mercenaries (*xenoi*) and subsequently made an attempt at becoming tyrant, probably in the mid 360s (Plut. *Timol.* 4). Diodorus claims that Hieron hired mercenaries when he succeeded Gelon

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<sup>492</sup> Thucydides' short reference to Evarchus may be one of the earliest and most reliable pieces of evidence relating to the tyrants' use of mercenaries. Here Thucydides was referring to a contemporary figure and, as we know from his comments regarding the mercenaries hired for the Sicilian expedition, Thucydides lived at a time when the enlisting of foreign soldiers for pay by the state was a known practice. It is likely that this instance is the first secure reference to a tyrant hiring mercenary soldiers. While oppressing citizens with foreign mercenaries was a standard accusation against tyrants, and such instances should therefore be examined with caution, the evidence of Thucydides, and the conspicuous absence of evidence for Archaic mercenaries, suggests that employment of mercenaries by tyrants became a widespread phenomenon during the later half of the fifth century.

<sup>493</sup> Lewis (2004) 70.

<sup>494</sup> Timophanes' attempt at tyranny in Corinth is also mentioned by Diodorus, who makes no mention of mercenary troops but claims Timophanes was collecting panoplies to distribute to his followers who were from the poorer elements of the *polis* (Diod. Sic. 16.65.3).

as tyrant of Syracuse in 476, although this may be an anachronism (Diod. Sic. 11.48.3). Similarly Diodorus has Thrasybulus, another Deinomenid, enlist foreign soldiers, who served for pay, in 466 to oppose the citizens who were becoming restless under his rule (Diod. Sic. 11.67.5). The lack of contemporary evidence for the Deinomenids, particularly Thrasybulus, makes it difficult to discern whether these early fifth-century tyrants were employing mercenaries, as Thrasybulus' rule is a mere three decades from the relatively secure evidence of Thucydides, or whether their armed supporters conformed with the Archaic practices. Dionysius I and his son Dionysius II hired large and diverse numbers of mercenaries, including Celts and Iberians (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.20; Diod. Sic. 14.44.2).<sup>495</sup> Dionysius I went so far as to double the pay of his soldiers after becoming *strategos autokrator* (Diod. Sic. 13.93.2). The timely arrival of twelve-hundred Campanians and a further three hundred mercenaries saved Dionysius' tyranny during the second major threat to his rule (Diod. Sic. 14.9.1-4). Dionysius II may have returned to power in Syracuse in 347 by invading the city at the head of a mercenary force (Plut. *Timol.* 1).<sup>496</sup> Jason of Pherae collected large numbers of mercenaries, Xenophon has Polydamas claim that there were as many as six thousand (Xen. *Hell.* 6.1.5).<sup>497</sup> His relative Alexander of Pherae also employed mercenary soldiers (*misthophoroi*) (Diod. Sic. 15.75.1). Euphron took care to ingratiate himself with the foreign mercenaries in the service of

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<sup>495</sup> Diodorus' account of Dionysius I's extensive preparations for war with Carthage (Diod. Sic. 14.41-43) is difficult to reconcile with the military realities and limitations of the Classical Greek *polis*. In these passages Diodorus describes Dionysius ordering the construction of hundreds of warships and enormous quantities of arms and armour. Diodorus also implies that Dionysius himself mobilised large amounts of manpower by offering high wages and bounties to productive workers. This mass mobilisation of resources and manpower reads suspiciously like the act of a Hellenistic king or of republican Rome than of a Classical Greek *polis*.

<sup>496</sup> Demosthenes accused Philip of using mercenaries (*xenoi*) to overthrow the Eretrian democracy and to set up the tyranny of Philistides (Dem. 9.33).

<sup>497</sup> Berve (1967) 287: 'Gestützt auf diese Soldnermacht, gesichert durch eine Leibwache, herrschte er über Pherai kaum anders als einstige Tyrannen in Griechenland.' Berve's view somewhat oversimplifies the diverse range of methods tyrants employed to gain power. Although we know little of Jason from the sources, Xenophon notes Jason engagement with religious ritual and custom, and the continued prominence of his children after his death suggests Jason's family was prominent and influential within Thessaly.

Sicyon. Xenophon claimed that Euphron distributed *chremata* to them and increased their numbers, serving the double purpose of increasing Sicyonian military power and his own influence as his son was in command of the mercenaries (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.45-46). Euphron returned to power in Sicyon after a civil war with the support of a mercenary force provided by Athens (Xen. *Hell.* 7.3.4). According to Diodorus (15.2.3), Evagoras of Salamis was given *chremata* by Hecatomnus of Caria to support the *xenikoi* that fought for him. Diodorus (15.2.4) notes that Evagoras had an abundance of wealth with which to hire *misthophoroi*. Unlike the Homeric *basileis* and Archaic tyrants, Classical tyranny does seem to have made use of plainly mercenary soldiers. The Classical tyrants continued to use friends and family as well as allies secured through traditional social practices in a military capacity, but hired soldiers were also employed by tyrants from the fifth century onwards. Mercenary forces do not seem to have pushed out the older method of securing armed supporters through traditional relationships entirely. As we shall see, friends, family and marriage alliances continued to have significance for Classical tyrants.

The regularity in the sources of Classical tyrants' use of mercenaries encourages the view that such forces were abundantly available and that tyrants had little financial difficulty employing them. In reality the use of mercenaries was limited by the simple fact that they had to be paid.<sup>498</sup> Xenophon's *Hieron* claims that the largest and most necessary expenditure of the tyrant goes to maintaining his *phulakes* (Xen. *Hieron.* 4.9). Xenophon explains that the tyrant's *phulakes* are his most necessary expenditure because without them he will surely be destroyed.<sup>499</sup>

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<sup>498</sup> On the financial costs of ancient Greek mercenaries see Trundle (2004) 81, 92-98.

<sup>499</sup> Dion is described by Plutarch entering Syracuse surrounded by a hundred of his mercenaries (*xenoi*) who made up his *phulakēs* (Plut. *Dion.* 28), yet the sources never depict him as a tyrant or claim that he had tyrannical ambitions.

While Xenophon's *Hieron* attempts to create a very negative image of tyranny as repressive and hysterically paranoid, Xenophon himself had an abundance of military experience including service in foreign wars, and clearly had a grasp of the practical implications of paying and supplying large numbers of soldiers (e.g. *Xen. An.* 7.3.10; 3.3.18). Furthermore, Diodorus' revealing statement regarding Dionysius I's method of hiring mercenaries as late as possible to save money (*Diod. Sic.* 14.43.4), shows that even very wealthy tyrants probably had limited resources with which to acquire mercenaries. It also raises the question of whether or not tyrants hired mercenaries as permanently established units or to meet the needs of the current crisis.

Figures who were not tyrants but were closely associated with military leadership and employed mercenaries, such as Hermocrates (*Diod. Sic.* 13.75.5) and Dion of Syracuse (*Plut. Dion.* 34, 48), were suspected of tyrannical ambitions.<sup>500</sup> Plutarch has Dion's enemies try to sever his links with the military while they malign him as a potential tyrant. Plutarch, overwhelmingly favourable to Dion, claims that these opponents were envious troublemakers and demagogues but in the context of the Classical Greek distrust of military office-holders and their severe censure of those who overstepped their powers, the distrust of Dion's influence over the mercenaries is understandable and certainly not without parallel. Mercenary forces were available to tyrants from the fifth century onwards, and these rulers understandably made use of this new form of military support.

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<sup>500</sup> Evans (2016) 168, has suggested that, up until the birth of Dionysius II, Dion was in fact the 'heir presumptive' to the tyranny. If this is accurate then it could help explain why a number of Syracusans suspected Dion of tyrannical ambitions.

*c) Religious practice*

The interaction of the Classical tyrants with religious custom remained consistent with the behaviour of their Archaic predecessors. Gelon set up impressive thank-offerings at Delphi (Tod 17; Meiggs and Lewis 28). Bacchylides wrote that no man had sent more gold to Apollo at Delphi than Hieron (Bacchylides. 3.63-66). Physical examples of Hieron's dedications have also been found. An inscribed helmet from Olympia bears an inscription dedicating the object to Zeus from Hieron and the Syracusans (Tod 22; Meiggs and Lewis 29). Pindar describes Hieron 'caring' for, or 'protecting' (ἀμφιέπω), Demeter and Zeus of Aetna (*Olympian* 6.95).<sup>501</sup> The family of Gelon had traditionally held the office of priest of the earth goddess at Gela (Hdt. 7.153). Harrell has argued that the sanctuary of the Syracusans at Olympia was originally built by Gelon to commemorate his victory at Himera. Harrell bases this on the name given to the sanctuary by Pausanias, 'the treasury of the Carthaginians', referring to the Phoenician trophies kept there, and Pausanias' description of Phoenician spoils contained within the treasury that were dedicated by Gelon and the Syracusans (Paus. 6.19.7).<sup>502</sup> Gelon was also remembered for dedicating large amounts of booty to the gods (Diod. Sic. 11.25). Athenaeus also mentions the offerings of Gelon and Hieron at Delphi (Ath. 6.20). The practice of giving booty taken in war as well as other precious items to temples and sanctuaries was already well established by the time of Homer and was carried on by the Classical tyrants.<sup>503</sup> Polyzalos of Gela, a Deinomenid and brother of no less than three tyrants, dedicated the Delphi Charioteer in the first half of the fifth century. The inscription on the

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<sup>501</sup> On the archaeology of Sicilian tyrants' temple-building see Morgan (2015) 46-51.

<sup>502</sup> Harrell (2006) 128-129.

<sup>503</sup> There is no need to regard Greek displays of piety and displays of power, wealth and success as mutually exclusive. See Jim (2014) 176-202, particularly 190: 'Display and competition, however, were not necessarily separated from or incompatible with piety. Doubtless an important reason for offering military tithes was to render the gods their due and to acknowledge their role in successful undertakings.'

monument also asks that Apollo favour Polyzalos (Jeffery *LSAG*.9). The children of Deinomenes appear to have dedicated a number of offerings at important sanctuaries such as Delphi. Diodorus recorded that Gelon also built temples to Demeter and Kore and sent a golden tripod to Delphi as a thank-offering to Apollo (Diod. Sic. 11.26.7), and records that Dionysius I built temples in Syracuse (Diod. Sic. 15.13.5).

Much as Pisistratus was believed to have maintained the traditional sacrifices carried out in Athens during the sixth century, Aristotle describes Dionysius I organising the community-wide dedication of offerings to Demeter and states that Dionysius I made sacrifice to Demeter himself ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1349a). This was not an unusual practice: as noted above the family of Gelon had traditionally held the office of priest of the earth goddess at Gela. Plutarch also mentions Dionysius II<sup>504</sup> offering sacrifice upon the arrival of Plato in Syracuse and mentions his presence at the ‘customary sacrifices’ (Plut. *Dion.* 13). Isocrates praised Nicocles for his piety in providing offerings for his dead father, Evagoras, and for holding games and contests in his honour (Isoc. 9.1). While Plutarch is a late source, it was certainly not unusual for Greek rulers, legitimate office-holders or otherwise, to be present at state sacrifices or to organise spontaneous sacrifices in thanksgiving or to avert some perceived disaster.<sup>505</sup>

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<sup>504</sup> Sanders (1991) 275-287, has argued that Dionysius I and his son and successor could have received honours commonly associated with the ‘ruler cult’ of the Hellenistic period. This is in an interesting theory but unfortunately Sanders’ evidence is either very late or very vague. The evidence, such as literary records of certain statues of the tyrants supposedly bearing features resembling the gods Dionysus and Apollo, requires a very optimistic reading of the evidence to be of any significance.

<sup>505</sup> Gelon was described by a later source as being awarded posthumous heroic honours in Syracuse (Diod. Sic. 11.38.5) and so was another Sicilian tyrant, Theron of Acragas (Diod. Sic. 11.53.2). This does not prove that these men received heroic honours during their lifetimes, but probably reflects the well-established tradition of posthumously worshipping extraordinary men who did remarkable things in life as heroes.



Games in honour of the gods, as noted in the third chapter, provided an extraordinary opportunity to display and spend wealth, to display skills, virtues and in victory show one's favourable relationship with the gods. Victory in the games also brought praise and honour for the victor in their home *polis* as their victory showed the Greek world the wealth and power of their city. Thucydides has Alcibiades try to convince the Athenians of his reliability by explaining that his victories in the chariot races at the Olympic games advertised the power and glory of Athens to the Greek world (Thuc. 6.16.1-2). If victory in the games brought praise and admiration to the victor at home, this partly explains why some tyrants enthusiastically invested their wealth in participating. Homeric *basileis* and tyrants worked to maintain popular support in their communities and games provided an excellent opportunity to encourage popular support.<sup>506</sup> Hieron and Theron of Acragas were both victors in panhellenic games and were celebrated in Pindar's victory odes. At Olympia Pausanias saw a statue group of a chariot flanked by jockeys and their horses, commissioned by Deinomenes the son of Hieron, to commemorate his father's victories (Paus. 6.12; 8.42). The close relatives of these tyrants also achieved victories. Polyzalos, a Deinomenid, and Xenocrates (Pind. *Isthm.* 2), brother of Theron, both won victories at the Pythian games.<sup>507</sup> Pausanias wrote that some believed Gelon had won a victory at Olympia in 488 (Paus. 6.9.4-5), and a reconstructed inscription from Olympia appears to support this (*IvO* 143).<sup>508</sup> Dionysius I sent several four-horse chariots and pavilions made of expensive cloth to

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<sup>506</sup> Morgan (2015) 70, on tyrants and games: 'Clearly such triumph could function as either a precondition or an endorsement of the acquisition of autocratic power.' A more accurate interpretation would be that success in the games appears to have encouraged the popular support which was one of the various preconditions for a successful monarch.

<sup>507</sup> Morgan (2015) 71, provides a table of Deinomenid and Emmenid victories in panhellenic games as well as those of their associates and Anaxilaus of Rhegion.

<sup>508</sup> Pausanias himself believed that the Gelon son of Deinomenes mentioned in the inscription could not be the same Gelon who was tyrant of Syracuse. Pausanias gives reasons for this but they are not particularly compelling (Paus. 6.9.4-5).

the Olympic games (Diod. Sic. 14.109.1-2; cf. Lys. 33.3-5). Although the particular incident mentioned by Diodorus did not result in victories for Dionysius, the fact that his representatives attended the games, and that Dionysius invested his wealth in this way, proves his interest in the practice. Some of the best information on this phenomenon is found in praise poetry and victory odes, such as those of Pindar. Pindar's poetry claims the favour of the gods for his patrons who had won contests at the major sanctuaries. Pindar wrote that the gods must have assisted Hieron (*Ol.* 1.106), and that Artemis and Hermes personally assisted his chariot in the race (*Pyth.* 2.8, 10). The instances above are particularly interesting as they claim that the tyrant Hieron was a direct beneficiary of the gods' good will. A similar claim is made by Isocrates, admittedly outside the context of games, regarding Evagoras of Salamis. Isocrates stated that Evagoras was more favoured by the gods than other men (θεοφιλέστερον) (Isoc. 9.70).<sup>509</sup> In a victory ode Bacchylides claimed that Hieron had received from Zeus himself the *geras* of ruling over so many Greeks (Bacch. 3.11-12). It is significant that these sources claimed a personal, favourable connection between these tyrants and the gods.

In a very interesting and understudied passage Xenophon explains Jason of Pherae's relationship with Delphi and the Pythian games. Xenophon describes how, with the approach of the games, Jason ordered the *poleis* under his control to provide animals for sacrifice and offered a gold crown to the city who gave the finest bull. Not only were his demands of the cities modest, but he still assembled, according to Xenophon, many thousands of victims for sacrifice. Xenophon also claims that Jason mustered the Thessalian forces at this time because he wanted to manage the festival

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<sup>509</sup> Markou (2011) 60, considers the rulers of Cyprus to be 'royal dynasties' whose power was hereditary and protected by the gods. However, what we see in Isocrates is more like the claims of the Homeric poems and of Pindar, that the *basileus* enjoyed the favour of the gods.

and the games himself, implying that this force would have enabled him to do so (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.29-32).<sup>510</sup> Even Jason's community-wide collection of animals for sacrifice is not without precedent. Jason's use of his position and influence to accumulate the most and the best quality sacrifices recalls the two scenes of sacrifice encountered in the *Odyssey* and discussed in Chapter I. In the first instance Nestor oversees the sacrifice of nine bulls by the nine groups of people that he rules (*Od.* 3.5-8), in the second Nestor personally organises the sacrifice of a heifer, one that meets certain conditions of quality, and has its horns plated with his own gold (*Od.* 3.418-429). A similar incident is also reported in Herodotus who records a tale in which Croesus sacrifices animals by the thousand and orders every Lydian to offer sacrifice (*Hdt.* 1.50). Jason follows the regular pattern of Greek rulers regarding their relationship with the gods, which was to ensure their favour by conspicuously offering the most impressive sacrifices and dedications. He uses his unique level of influence and access to wealth to arrange lavish sacrifices, displaying generosity and piety. Xenophon also records a general belief of the time that Jason might have desired to seize the treasures at Delphi, claiming that the Delphians were so worried about the possibility that they even asked the oracle what they should do if Jason tried to take any of the god's wealth (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.30). The desire to loot the sanctuaries is an unsubstantiated accusation levelled at several tyrants. It would not make sense for Jason to collect and ultimately destroy so much of his own wealth by sacrificing or dedicating it to the god only to rob Apollo's sacred treasures. Xenophon also states quite clearly that Jason's aim was to take control of the Pythian games and administer them himself. It is far more likely that Jason merely intended to administer the games, perhaps even by force, and enjoy the ensuing increase in

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<sup>510</sup> Berve (1967) 289, writes that Jason may have done this in order to demonstrate his military power as a potential *hegemon* in a war against Persia. Unfortunately there is no contemporary evidence that Jason ever seriously considered attacking Persia at the head of a united Greece.

prestige, as Philip II would do later in the fourth century.<sup>511</sup> The importance of appearing as the protector of Apollo's shrine may also have been recognised by the Phocian tyrant Philomelos. While the violence of the Phocian tyrants is noted by several sources, Buckler notes that Philomelos' decision to have his Locrian prisoners thrown from the cliffs conformed to the standard punishment for those that committed sacrilege, and may have been an attempt to present Philomelos as the defender of Delphi's holy places.<sup>512</sup>

Association with oracles continued to be significant for Classical tyrants. Plutarch preserves a tale in which Deinomenes is told by the oracle at Delphi that three of his sons, Gelon, Hieron and Thrasybulus, will all be tyrants (Plut. *De Pyth.* 19). Diodorus mentions a dream of Gelon in which he was struck by lightning and a tale in which Gelon as a child chased a wolf from his schoolroom. The school then collapsed and killed all the other boys (Diod. Sic. 10.29). Cicero reports two tales regarding Dionysius I which he claimed were taken directly from the contemporary account of Philistus. The first is the tale, supposedly put about by Dionysius' mother, that, while pregnant with Dionysius, she dreamt she gave birth to a satyr. The interpreters declared that her child would become famous and enjoy a long period of good fortune.<sup>513</sup> The second portent recorded by Cicero, again quoting Philistus, describes how a swarm of bees settled in the mane of Dionysius' horse, and that this

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<sup>511</sup> Demosthenes claimed that Philip had taken control of the Pythian games, conspicuously presenting himself to the Greek world as the organiser of the sacred event (Dem. 9.32). Philip also managed to establish himself as a member of the Amphictyonic council (Dem. 11.4).

<sup>512</sup> 'Traditionally, those guilty of sacrilege against Apollo's sanctuary were punished by being hurled from the steep and lofty Phaidriadae. By subjecting the captured Lokrians to this fate, Philomelos emphasized the Phokian claim to the presidency of the sanctuary. Those who opposed him and his countrymen opposed the god, and would be punished accordingly.' Buckler (1989) 24.

<sup>513</sup> Huic interpretes portentorum, qui Galeotae tum in Sicilia nominabantur, responderunt, ut ait Philistus, eum, quem illa peperisset, clarissimum Graeciae diuturna cum fortuna fore (Cic. *De Div.* 1.39).

was taken as an indication of future success (Cic. *De Div.* 1.73).<sup>514</sup> Isocrates also claimed that portents and oracles had surrounded the birth of Evagoras, predicting his future success and affirming his descent from Zeus (Isoc. 9.21). Diodorus recorded two anecdotes containing prophecies regarding Philomelos the Phocian. In the first, Philomelos forced Apollo's priestess at Delphi to climb upon the tripod to make a prophecy and the priestess exclaimed that Philomelos was able to do as he pleased, as he was resorting to violence and clearly stronger than her. Philomelos took this exclamation to be an oracle and had it published to show that Apollo approved of his actions (Diod. Sic. 16.27.1). Even though it is likely that Diodorus was using a source that was hostile to Philomelos, showing him as violent and sacrilegious, Philomelos was still attempting to secure an oracle that would approve of his actions and by extension confirm his position. In the second tale an eagle appears and snatches up a number of pigeons from the temple of Apollo. Those who knew about such things interpreted the sign to mean that Philomelos and the Phocians would control the affairs of Delphi (Diod. Sic. 16.27.2). These instances recall the oracles that attended the Archaic tyrants as they clearly serve the same function: foretelling the rule of the tyrant and predicting his future success.

#### *d) Wealth*

Greed and a desire for wealth form a strong stereotype of Classical tyranny. Ingenious tricks to collect money, confiscations, appropriation of public funds, the theft of sacred treasure, plundering, enslaving and outright seizures of property are common occurrences in the accounts of Classical tyrants. In an article on Dionysius I Bullock reminds the reader that Dionysius was known to the Greek world, and to

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<sup>514</sup> In ancient times Philistus was generally well regarded as a historian but also widely acknowledged as a supporter of tyranny. Plutarch wrote that he was *philotyrrannótatos* (Plut. *Dion.* 36). Cf. Diod. Sic. 16.16.3; C. Nep. *Dion.* 3.

Greek historians, as ‘a money-getter and money-spender.’<sup>515</sup> While this statement might seem obvious to those familiar with the accounts of Dionysius I it is important to remember the fact that Greek tyrants, like their Archaic predecessors, were in constant need of money to maintain their position. As shown in the previous chapters Greek rulers, *basileis* or tyrants, were obliged to spend large amounts of wealth to engage in the very practices that made them rulers in the first place. The payment of soldiers, construction of temples, sacrifices and dedications, gifts to friends and public displays of generosity required the constant spending of wealth in many different forms, all of which had to be collected from a number of different sources. Any discussion of Classical tyranny and wealth, however, has to acknowledge the fact that the authors of the sources were simply not concerned with the daily functions of the *polis* under tyrannical rule, let alone the extent of their property or exact financial circumstances. Aristotle’s collection of anecdotes that list the schemes Dionysius I supposedly used to collect money are a good example of this. While most of these stories are surely apocryphal, the schemes being impractical and obviously unenforceable, they may well be founded on a grain of truth. Dionysius collected wealth from the community to dedicate to the goddess Demeter, sold captured populations as slaves, plundered captured settlements and raided Tyrrhenia for booty ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1349a-b). These stories probably represent a number of realistic methods by which tyrants like Dionysius could gather wealth. In part due to hostile sources such as Aristotle, it is very difficult to determine the extent to which tyrants merely co-opted the existing mechanisms for tax or tribute gathering or used their own wealth to fund their ambitions. To what extent their private wealth was mingled with what might be considered public funds is also unclear. Demosthenes,

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<sup>515</sup> Bullock (1930) 263.

for example, claimed that Philip had appropriated the public funds of the Thessalians for himself (Dem. 6.22), and Jason of Pherae was empowered as *tagos* to collect large amounts of wealth from the Thessalian cities (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.29). Aristotle wrote that Dionysius I of Syracuse collected taxes (*eisphora*) from the population (Arist. *Pol.* 1313b16). Money was certainly necessary for Jason to pay the six thousand mercenaries he had enrolled, as well as to perform the impressive sacrifices that Xenophon describes Jason organising.<sup>516</sup> Euphron is accused by Xenophon of confiscating the property of the better citizens in order to use the money to pay his mercenaries (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.46). Such statements by the sources are problematic because, in this example, the source is so overtly hostile and the accusation that tyrants oppressed their fellow citizens with foreign mercenaries was a standard criticism of tyranny. In Euphron's case, it is difficult to discern whether Xenophon was throwing a clichéd accusation of tyrannical behaviour at a man he despised, or accurately recording the actions of a man whose behaviour happened to fit the profile of a tyrant.

Diodorus claimed that Dionysius gave out the land of Syracuse in equal portions to citizens and aliens, except for the best land which he gave to his *philoi* (Diod. Sic. 14.7.4-5). Diodorus places this event after the revolt of the cavalry (Diod. Sic. 13.112.2-6), and therefore the property of the exiles could have been that which was given over to Dionysius' *philoi*. However to accomplish the kind of distribution that Diodorus describes would have required Dionysius to control very large tracts of land, or to have held the power to redistribute nothing less than the entire territory of

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<sup>516</sup> Regarding the strange anecdotes about Jason's ploys to gain money, Sprawski (1999) 52, perceptively notes: 'Interestingly enough, however, all these anecdotes are in agreement that Jason covered the costs of maintaining his huge army of 6,000 mercenaries from the estate of his own family.' Berve (1967) 287, also believed that Jason sources much of his wealth from the inherited estate of his family.

Syracuse. While there is no good reason to doubt that Dionysius I gave lands and other property to his *philoï*, especially as Isocrates, a contemporary of Dionysius I, recommended generosity towards a ruler's *philoï* in a passage concerned with the management and use of wealth (Isoc. 2.19), it is difficult to accept Diodorus' claim that such a huge redistribution occurred. It is more likely that Dionysius merely gave the property of his enemies to his friends and allies, and while this may have been substantial, accusations of large-scale land redistribution should be approached cautiously.

A number of Classical tyrants seem to have been wealthy men from rich families. Polyaeus' collection of tricks and schemes used by Jason of Pherae to collect money generally describe Jason deceiving his rich mother or one of his rich brothers into giving him their wealth (Polyaeus *Strat.* 6.1.2-5, 6-7). The private wealth of the tyrants Hieron and Theron was openly celebrated by Pindar. While the form of this wealth is generally not specified, it is difficult to believe that Hieron's family did not own lands around Syracuse and Gela, although there is no evidence for this except the comment of Diodorus that Gelon's body was buried on land owned by his widow (Diod. Sic. 11.38). Hieron's hearth is called 'rich' by Pindar (*Ol.* 1.10), and Hieron himself is said to have collected an unparalleled crown of wealth (*Pyth.* 1.49-50). Hieron, Pindar claims, has been given wealth along with wisdom by *tyche* (*Pyth.* 2.56-57). Hieron's wealth is celebrated and described in the most dramatic style by Bacchylides, who speaks of Hieron's 'towering piles of wealth' (Bacchylides. 3.13 [West]). Xenophon's *Hieron* also implies a popular contemporary belief that tyrants were extraordinarily wealthy and therefore occupied



an enviable position (Xen. *Hieron.* 2.1-2).<sup>517</sup> Timophanes of Corinth was believed by Diodorus to have been particularly wealthy (Diod. Sic. 16.65.3). According to Diodorus, the house of Dionysius I contained a large amount of silver and gold as well as other precious items (Diod. Sic. 13.112.4). The wealth of Dionysius I was described by Diodorus as prominently displayed during the sumptuous celebrations held for his weddings, with one wife brought in a trireme fitted with silver and gold, and the other carried to his house in a four-horse chariot (Diod. Sic. 14.44.7-8). Isocrates advised Nicocles to remain frugal in his habits, but to be luxurious in his dress and personal appearance as befitted a ruler (Isoc. 2.32).

The wealth possessed by Classical tyrants did not just take the form of cash, treasure items or goods but also of land and estates. The extent of the Dionysii's private property, particularly land, is hinted at by sources whose authorial interests unfortunately lay elsewhere. Diodorus explains that Dionysius I, aiming to secure at least the neutrality of the Messenians in the coming war with Carthage, made a present of land to them which secured their goodwill (Diod. Sic. 14.44.3-4). It is not clear if this was land Dionysius I owned himself or if it was territory that he controlled as the man who, as *strategos autokrator*, directed the public business of Syracuse and her subjects. Either way, Dionysius I exercised enough power to dispose of large pieces of land as he saw fit. Dionysius also gave gifts of money to soldiers who had performed particularly well in battle (Diod. Sic. 14.53.4). When Dionysius was faced with large numbers of mercenaries demanding their pay, he bought them off by giving to them the city and territory of Leontini in lieu of their pay (Diod. Sic. 14.78.2-3). Dionysius' military power appears to have been closely

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<sup>517</sup> Isocrates' letter to the children of Jason makes a very similar argument against the belief that tyranny led to wealth, pleasure and happiness (Isoc. L.6.11-13).

connected to his ability to distribute wealth in the form of pay, booty and land to his soldiers. Dionysius II exiled Dion and took his property, coming to distrust him and to regard him as a threat. Dion was a very wealthy man. Dion's wealth, even during the straitened circumstances of his exile, was marvelled at by his fellow Greeks (Plut. *Dion.* 15). Dionysius II profited from Dion's considerable estates by confiscating and selling them (Plut. *Dion.* 18, 19). We may speculate that the wealth of the younger Dionysius must have been truly extraordinary,<sup>518</sup> perhaps even making him one of the wealthiest men in the Greek world. Dionysius' collection of wealth through conquest and the confiscation of his enemies' property appears to have provoked accusations, ancient and modern, of demagoguery and of inciting class conflict. Aristotle, for example, accused Dionysius of stirring up the masses against the rich in Syracuse (Arist. *Pol.* 1306a).<sup>519</sup> After the revolt of the cavalry Dionysius certainly killed or exiled the rebels, seizing their property and land and distributing it to his friends, as well as to Syracusan citizens and resident aliens (Diod. Sic. 14.7.4-5). The view that this was a class-based action, rather than simply a case of rewarding one's friends with the property of one's enemies, is rightly criticised by Caven.<sup>520</sup>

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<sup>518</sup> Plutarch calls the tyranny of the Dionysii the 'greatest tyranny ever' (Plut. *Dion.* 50; *Timol.* 1).

<sup>519</sup> Lintott (1982) 185, has stated that: 'Among Aristotle's lists of demagogue tyrants...only Dionysius overthrows a truly democratic constitution by rabble-rousing and attacks on the rich.' It is, however, unlikely that Dionysius truly incited the citizens against the rich as two distinct factions. As noted by Andrewes (1956) 140: 'But it was not class feeling of this simple kind that got him the backing of men like Philistus, or the rich and influential Hipparinus whose daughter he later married. It must be remembered too that he had followed Hermocrates himself, and thought it worth his while to get the Hermocrateans recalled, and married Hermocrates' daughter at the moment when he gained his bodyguard and his tyranny.' It does not make sense that Dionysius, originally a supporter of the rich and influential Hermocrates, would have incited the Syracusans against the rich when his supporters, such as Philistus, Hipparinus and Dion, were themselves some of the richest men in Syracuse.

<sup>520</sup> Regarding this incident, note the comments of Caven (1990) 78-79: 'Diodorus' statement would imply that Dionysius put through a full-scale redistribution of land (*gēs anadasmōs*), the terror of Greek landowning societies; but I believe that we may safely say that this was not the case. Even if Dionysius had had the force at his disposal to evict thousands of small landowners, all of them in possession of their arms, from the soil, he had no reason to wish to do so. He was a war-lord in the making, not a social reformer or revolutionary. He had not been put in power as the result of a rising of the landless against the landowners, and although he had not scrupled to exploit class suspicion, it

Dionysius I's apparent desire for wealth was translated by Diodorus into a plot to seize Delphi and plunder the treasures of the gods (Diod. Sic. 15.13.1). As with the accusation levelled at Jason, this simply does not fit with the tyrants' conspicuous and well evidenced desire to engage in religious custom. Why would Dionysius I spend so much wealth honouring the gods at Olympia (Diod. Sic. 14.109.1-2) only to commit the most appalling sacrilege at Delphi? On a political level such an act would have alienated Dionysius I from the entire Greek world, as pointed out by Lewis.<sup>521</sup> While Aristotle accuses Dionysius I of looting the temple of Leucothea, this temple was in Tyrrhenia and Aristotle is a deeply hostile source ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1349b). This isolated incident, assuming that it did occur, is hardly evidence of Dionysius I's intention to loot the most important sacred sites in the Greek world. Dionysius I was also an extraordinarily capable politician and a shrewd enough ruler to tempt both Sparta and Athens with his immense resources and manpower while alienating neither. It is unlikely that a ruler of his political acumen would have been willing to provoke international outrage by stealing from Delphi or Olympia. The religious behaviour and the political ability of the elder Dionysius does not support this piece of ancient slander.<sup>522</sup> A successful tyrant like Dionysius I would hardly go to the effort and great expense of depositing treasures at a sanctuary

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had been that of the hoplite class against the governing class.' Although Caven's comments regarding conflict between the 'hoplite class' and landowners are a generalisation, his rejection of the idea that Dionysius was in any sense a reformer or social revolutionary is correct and well founded in Diodorus' account. Dionysius merely rewarded his supporters with the confiscated property, and demonstrated his generosity by distributing the remainder to the citizens and aliens. Neither policy was innovative or revolutionary, being practised by Homeric *basileis* and Archaic tyrants.

<sup>521</sup> Lewis (2009) 62.

<sup>522</sup> Berve (1967) 249, rightly rejects the accusation that Dionysius I intended to plunder Delphi: 'Die Behauptung einer gehässigen Tradition, er habe das delphische Heiligtum plündern wollen, das er im Gegenteil durch Sendung von Weihgeschenken und Förderung des Tempelneubaus zu fördern gedachte, verdient keinen Glauben.' Woodhead (1970) 504, also rejects the accusation that Dionysius I intended to plunder the sacred treasures at Delphi.

merely to violently and criminally rob them back, destroying his international reputation and domestic credibility in the process.

Similar accusations were brought against Euphron by Xenophon, a very hostile critic of Euphron. Xenophon claims, in a phrase reminiscent of the complaints in Solon's poetry (Solon. 4.11-12 [West]),<sup>523</sup> that Euphron spared neither public property nor sacred property in paying the mercenaries (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.46). That Euphron took sacred treasures is not substantiated elsewhere, and such an act would have surely disgusted the people of Sicyon, who later honoured Euphron with heroic status. Euphron was very popular with a significant faction within the city and it is unlikely such monstrous impiety would have contributed to such enthusiastic support. While Euphron was clearly in need of money, the mercenaries being one of the pillars of his authority, it is very difficult to unquestioningly accept Xenophon's statement. First, because of the moral, and by extension political, revulsion with which Greeks regarded temple robbers it is unlikely that an able politician like Euphron ever seriously contemplated stealing from temples; second, because the accusation is not corroborated elsewhere; third, because Xenophon was so overtly hostile to Euphron; fourth, because Xenophon used the accusation of temple robbing in his *Hieron* as a criticism of tyranny in general (Xen. *Hieron.* 4.11).

While several tyrants appear to have been maligned in antiquity with accusations of sacrilege, the Phocian tyrants do appear to have taken the treasures at Delphi for themselves during the Third Sacred War. While Diodorus states twice that Philomelos did not take the sacred treasures (Diod. Sic. 16.28.2, 56.5-6), he directly

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<sup>523</sup> See Noussia-Fantuzzi (2010) 237.

contradicts himself elsewhere (Diod. Sic. 16.30.1), while stating that Onomarchus and Phayllus did melt down the dedications to be coined. Plutarch wrote that both Philomelos and Onomarchus stole the sacred treasures (Plut. *Tim.* 30.4), and Pausanias noted that the Phocians did take money from the sanctuary (Paus. 3.10.4). This act of sacrilege appears to have been motivated by necessity, rather than the cliché of tyrannical lust for wealth. The Phocians had entered into the Third Sacred War ill prepared,<sup>524</sup> the war itself was costly in manpower and money,<sup>525</sup> and they faced several powerful opponents which they were unlikely to overcome on the strength of their own resources. Furthermore, the ultimate destination of the plundered treasures was the Phocians' mercenaries. The sources, despite their hostility to the Phocian tyrants, overwhelmingly depict Delphi's wealth going to pay the army (Diod. Sic. 16.56.5-6; Plut. *Tim.* 30.4), rather than into the pockets of the tyrants themselves. Diodorus specifically states that Philomelos was compelled to plunder the treasures to meet the costs of the war (Diod. Sic. 16.30.1). Anecdotes of the Phocian tyrants using the god's treasures for personal gratification are curiously few (e.g. Ath. 13.83).

Dionysius I used his wealth to encourage the support of individuals or communities for his tyranny. Dionysius quelled an incipient revolt against his rule partly through the verbal support of his Spartan ally Pharacidas and by subsequently distributing gifts and laying on public banquets for the Syracusans (Diod. Sic. 14.70.3). These gifts, and those of land and other property mentioned above, appear to have had some effect on the populace. Aside from the obvious example quoted above, where an incipient revolt was quelled by gifts, the consistent failure of the

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<sup>524</sup> Buckler (1989) 20.

<sup>525</sup> Buckler (1989) 39.

Syracusans to unite and form an effective opposition to Dionysius suggests that he was popular enough to make at least a portion of the populace hesitant to fight against him. Most of the citizens chose not to assist the cavalry during the very serious revolt of 405 and on several occasions the Syracusans appear to have either had misgivings about revolting against Dionysius or suffered from crippling internal dissent and indecision when they actually took up arms against him.<sup>526</sup>

As well as collecting wealth from their own property, taking it from their enemies and directing the use of public funds,<sup>527</sup> tyrants may also have received gifts from those who wanted to cultivate their favour. In an interesting passage of Isocrates' *To Nicocles* the writer warns Nicocles against men who bring him gifts of gold, bronze and clothing (Isoc. 2.1), and Isocrates implies later in the text that he expects men to bring gifts to the tyrant (Isoc. 2.22).<sup>528</sup> If Isocrates' description is accurate then the practice of soliciting the favour of the local *basileus* with gifts had apparently not changed since the time of Polykrates (Hdt. 3.42), or of the Homeric *basileis* (*Od.* 15.84-85). Isocrates' mention of this practice is supported by Diodorus who records the Geloans giving gifts to Dionysius I (Diod. Sic. 13.93.4). While we should not overestimate the amount of wealth collected in this manner it is worth noting that both Homer and Hesiod considered the receiving of gifts a significant

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<sup>526</sup> The tyrant's use of wealth is a phenomenon which appears in the demosthenic speeches. Demosthenes claimed that Philip had spread his influence partly by force and partly by distributing *chremata* to those who desired wealth (Dem. 10.5). In another speech the Athenians who were sympathetic to Philip are accused of doing so out of a desire for Philip's 'gifts' (Dem. 11.18). In a later speech the pro-Macedonian Athenians are accused of taking money from Alexander (Dem. 17.11). The theme of these accusations is quite clear, that the distribution of private wealth translated into political influence. Even if these claims were pure invention by Demosthenes to incite hostility towards Philip and Alexander and their sympathisers, enough Athenians must have found such an idea credible to encourage Demosthenes to make the claim in the first place.

<sup>527</sup> Xenophon wrote that the *tagos* could collect tribute from subject or neighbouring communities (Xen. *Hell.* 1.12, 19).

<sup>528</sup> Isocrates implies that Nicocles was himself a tyrant. He gives Nicocles advice, explaining that tyrants too often live free of admonition, while using *turannos*, *dunasteia* and *monarchia* interchangeably (Isoc. 2.4-5).

source of wealth for *basileis*, although Hesiod criticised the practice as it was liable to abuse (Od. 1.392-393; Hes. *Op.* 221, 264).

*e) Friends and family*

The Archaic tyrants made considerable use of friends and family members as allies, agents, councillors and subordinates. The loyalty of such individuals was generally secure and they contributed their own followers and resources to the tyrant's cause. Most of the identities and backgrounds of the individuals who served Classical tyrants as army officers or agents in diplomatic or civil capacities have been lost. Others, such as Doricus, who was loyal enough to Dionysius I that he attempted to quell a revolt in the army and was subsequently killed by the mutineers (Diod. Sic. 14.7.6-7), are no more than names. Enough examples, however, are preserved in the sources to show that the Classical tyrants surrounded themselves with relations and close friends on and off the battlefield.

In the fourth century Isocrates recommended that, for a tyrant, magnificence in generosity was particularly appropriate when giving benefits to the ruler's *philoï* (Isoc. 2.19). In the following passage Isocrates even advised Nicocles to give offices to those of his *philoï* who were the most closely related to him (Isoc. 2.20).<sup>529</sup> This chapter will show that Isocrates was not advocating a particularly novel method of securing one's power. A fragment of a stele recording an alliance between Erythrae and the tyrant Hermias of Atarneus, dated to c.350-c.342, details the terms that not only existed between Erythrae and Hermias, but also between Erythrae and Hermias'

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<sup>529</sup> In the following passage Isocrates is quite explicit that he is advising Nicocles on how to maintain a tyranny (Isoc. 2.21).

*hetairoi* (SIG<sup>3</sup> 229).<sup>530</sup> The Classical tyrants were just as quick to place friends and relatives in positions of power as their Archaic and Homeric predecessors.

Dionysius I had some considerable support from several wealthy and influential individuals who assisted him into the tyranny. Aristotle accuses a man named Hipparinus of supporting Dionysius during his seizure of power in 406/5 because Hipparinus expected to profit financially from the change in regime (Ar. *Pol.* 1306a1). Dionysius also had the support of a certain Heloris, who may have been his adopted father (Diod. Sic. 14.8.5). Not the least of Dionysius' supporters was the wealthy admiral, soldier and historian Philistus (Diod. Sic. 13.91.4). There was also Dion, a hugely wealthy individual whose sister Dionysius I married (Diod. Sic. 14.44.8). Dionysius I appointed his brothers Thearidas and Leptines and his relatives by marriage as military and political leaders and ambassadors. We encounter all of these men at various points in the accounts regarding Dionysius' reign, taking leading roles in his regime. Leptines, for example, is mentioned frequently in the account of Diodorus. What is most striking about Dionysius' use of relatives is their employment as commanders of the army either subordinate to Dionysius himself or in independent commands. In the account of Diodorus Dionysius' forces are rarely commanded by anyone other than Dionysius himself or a member of his family. Leptines was given important military commands on land and sea, putting him in control of thousands of troops and large fleets of warships. We are also told of another brother of Dionysius, Thearides, who received similar responsibilities.<sup>531</sup> The prominence of Dionysius' brothers is reflected in their

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<sup>530</sup> A speech of Aeschines also mentions Phillip of Macedon's *hetairoi* (Aeschin. 2.157).

<sup>531</sup> After the sack of Motya Dionysius gave Leptines a fleet of one hundred and twenty ships and entrusted him with the sieges of Aegesta and Entella (Diod. Sic. 14.53.5-54.4). Leptines was regularly used as a senior naval commander by Dionysius (Diod. Sic. 14.55.2-3; 14.59.7; 14.60.2-4; 14.72.1;



presence in an Athenian inscription of 394/3 in which Leptines, Thearidas and Polyxenos are named immediately after Dionysius himself (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 18). Similarly Isocrates implies that Evagoras used his son Pythagoras as a senior commander during his war with Persia (Isoc. 9.62). Diodorus is more explicit, stating that Evagoras left Pythagoras in Cyprus as *hegemon* while he travelled to Egypt to meet with his allies (Diod. Sic. 15.4.3). Plutarch makes a similar statement about Dionysius II, writing that the younger Dionysius left his son, Apollocrates, in command of the citadel of Syracuse (Plut. *Dion.* 37). Euphron of Sicyon further secured his position by placing his son in command of Sicyon's foreign mercenary contingent (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.45).

Xenophon quotes a speech by Polydamas of Pharsalus who declared himself to be the *proxenos* and *euergetes* of the Spartans, and implies that he had inherited these positions from his ancestors (Xen. *Hell.* 6.1.4). He had been sent as an envoy by Jason who, according to Xenophon, was relying on this relationship to ensure a favourable response from the Spartans, a response that would enable him to pursue his conquests unmolested by Spartan military power.

Classical tyrants were not by nature inclined to support other tyrants automatically. They did so only when it was in their interests and the other tyrants remained on friendly terms with them. Dionysius I persuaded a certain Aeimnestus to make himself tyrant of Enna but when Aeimnestus would not allow Dionysius into the city, Dionysius turned on him, supported the citizens and ultimately handed

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14.102.2-3). Leptines was ultimately killed leading a wing of Dionysius' army against the Carthaginians (Diod. Sic. 15.17.1-2). Dionysius appears to have been committed to the policy of using relatives by blood or marriage to control his powerful military. After making a decision contrary to Dionysius' interests Leptines was removed from his command by Dionysius and replaced by his brother Thearides (Diod. Sic. 14.102.3).

Aeimnestus over to them for punishment (Diod. Sic. 14.14.6-8). Nor was Dionysius particularly concerned with setting up other tyrants in other *poleis* when the destruction or transferral of their populations better suited his interests. After securing Catane and Naxos through treachery Dionysius chose to enslave the populations rather than install the traitorous generals as tyrants (Diod. Sic. 14.15.1-3).<sup>532</sup>

A significant number of Classical tyrants appear to have inherited their power from their fathers or close relatives, following in the tradition of the great tyrant families of the Archaic period such as the Cypselids and the Pisistratids. Thrasybulus inherited the tyranny of Syracuse from his brother Hieron (Diod. Sic. 11.66.4), who had inherited the tyranny from his brother Gelon. Thrasydaeus, who had been ruling Himera, also inherited the tyranny of Acragas after Theron's death in 476 (Diod. Sic. 11.53.1). Diodorus implies that Thrasydaeus was subordinate to his father during his lifetime, explaining that the idea of appealing to Theron about his son's government was mooted by the Himerans as they expected Theron to favour his son (Diod. Sic. 11.48.6-7). Diodorus also wrote that Anaxilas, tyrant of Rhegium and Zancle, died in the same year and that a certain Micythus held power on the understanding that the tyranny would be given to the sons of Anaxilas when they came of age (Diod. Sic. 11.48.2). This phenomenon was noted by Isocrates, who commented on the fact that some rulers inherited their *basileia* from their fathers (Isoc. 9.35). Nicocles had of course succeeded his father Evagoras as the ruler of Salamis. After Clearchus of Heraclea was murdered, his son Timotheus inherited the tyranny (Diod. Sic.

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<sup>532</sup> Philip, Demosthenes claimed, had set up a friendly tyranny in Euboea to directly threaten Athens (Dem. 10.8, cf. 10.68). Demosthenes makes mention of Philip's *hetairoi* and the *hegemones* of his *xenoi* (Dem. 11.10). Demosthenes accuses Alexander of setting up a wrestler named Chaeron as tyrant of Pellene (Dem. 17.10).

16.36.3). Upon the death of Timotheus his brother Dionysius became the tyrant of Heraclea (Diod. Sic. 16.88.5). The inheritance of tyranny from a father or close relative appears to have been a very common practice for Classical tyrants. This makes sense as the nearest male relative would have inherited the tyrant's property and a number of his relationships.

#### *f) Marriage*

Marriage brought the same benefits to Classical tyrants as it did to Archaic rulers. While one scholar has noted that marriage could have been a method to 'pass legitimate rule' from one tyrant to another,<sup>533</sup> there is no evidence of inherited kingship recognised by law in Archaic and Classical Greece except for the descendents of Herakles at Sparta. Furthermore, the fact that tyranny was popularly viewed as incompatible with the rule of law by Archaic and Classical Greeks, and the fact that Classical tyrants faced a constant struggle to maintain popular support both argue against the view of tyrant marriages as a means of legitimisation. Tyrants participated in marriage for the tangible benefits that it brought them, not because of abstract ideas of royal descent. These benefits took the form of political support, increased influence, wealth and the opportunity to produce male children who would be employed as military leaders, supporters and rulers in their own right. Diodorus even states that Dionysius remarried after the death of his first wife as he was eager to beget children, 'comprehending that the goodwill of his offspring would be the surest guard over his power' (Diod. Sic. 14.44.5). Given the evidence of the previous section on the tyrants' use of family and close friends, there is no reason to view Diodorus' statement regarding Dionysius' desire to remarry as inaccurate.

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<sup>533</sup> Mitchell (2013) 95.

In an interesting passage Diodorus records that Dionysius, almost immediately after becoming tyrant of Syracuse, married the daughter of Hermocrates and simultaneously married his own sister Theste to Polyxenus, who was Hermocrates' brother-in-law.<sup>534</sup> The purpose of these unions was clearly to bind Dionysius to the old supporters of Hermocrates, particular the more prominent and wealthy members of the faction, and Diodorus helpfully comments that Dionysius married into the house of Hermocrates in order to make his tyranny secure (*bebaios*) (Diod. Sic. 13.96.3; Cf. Plut. *Dion.*3). After his first wife's death during the revolt of 405 Dionysius married twice more. Diodorus attributes the initial impetus for one of these marriages to Dionysius' desire to gain the neutrality of certain *poleis* for the approaching war with Carthage. Dionysius married Doris the Locrian who Diodorus states was the daughter of Xenetus, the citizen most esteemed by the Locrians (Diod. Sic. 14.44.6). Dionysius also married a Syracusan wife, Aristomache, who appears to have been the daughter of Hipparinus, the man noted by Aristotle for being an early supporter of Dionysius (Ar. *Pol.* 1306a1).<sup>535</sup> Despite Aristotle's accusation that Hipparinus was merely attempting to make money from the association, Diodorus calls Hipparinus 'the most renowned of the Syracusans' (Diod. Sic. 16.6.2). Hipparinus was clearly an influential figure in Syracuse, suggesting a deliberate decision on the part of Dionysius to secure his support through the marriage with his daughter. In order to reconcile himself with his brother Leptines after his return from

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<sup>534</sup> Berve (1967) 249, attributes the marriage with Hermocrates' daughter to Dionysius' desire to enter the circle of Syracusan nobility. Berger (1992) 42, has also written that Dionysius married Hermocrates' daughter: 'in order to connect himself with aristocratic circles.' There is however no indication in the sources that the fifth century Syracusans were in any way overawed by men of particular rank or ancestry. The ultimate fate of Hermocrates himself attests to this. It is more likely that Dionysius wanted the support of the old supporters of Hermocrates who had survived their leader's defeat and death, and the support of Hermocrates' surviving relations.

<sup>535</sup> Diodorus claims Dionysius' Syracusan wife was the daughter of Hipparinus (Diod. Sic. 16.6.2). C. Nepos also wrote that Aristomache was the daughter of Hipparinus (Nep. *Dion.* 1)

exile, Dionysius married his daughter to Leptines (Diod. Sic. 15.7.4).<sup>536</sup> Dionysius II may have married off his sister Arete to one of his supporters named Timocrates (Plut. *Dion.* 21, 26). Arete was originally married to Dion by Dionysius I, but Plutarch mentions her being remarried to Timocrates by Dionysius II after Dion's exile in 366. Diodorus' account portrays Dionysius I and Dionysius II using marriage in much the same way as their Archaic and Homeric predecessors; as a method of securing allies, resolving conflict and to gather supporters.<sup>537</sup>

A speech of Lysias claims that Athenian ambassadors had been sent to Dionysius I in an attempt to encourage a marriage alliance between Dionysius I and Evagoras of Salamis, who was a steady ally of Athens (Lys. 19.20). The passage explains that this would have encouraged Dionysius I to detach himself from the Lacedaemonians and become friendly with Athens. This corresponds with Diodorus' political explanation for the marriages of Dionysius I (Diod. Sic. 14.44.4). The use of marriage to create good relations between states finds precedent in Herodotus. In the early fifth century Gygaia, sister of Alexander son of Amyntas, was married to a Persian named Bubares. This is of some significance because Herodotus partly attributes the good relations between Macedon and Persia at this time to the

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<sup>536</sup> Curiously Plutarch criticises Philistus, the historian and supporter of Dionysius I, for, among other things, admiring the marriages of tyrants (Plut. *Dion.* 36). Unfortunately Plutarch fails to explain his position and the historian is left to speculate whether Plutarch was criticising the political implications of tyrant marriages, such as the strengthening of the tyrants position and the spread of his influence at the expense of his people's liberty, or the luxurious manner in which they were apparently celebrated.

<sup>537</sup> This view is in opposition to that of Berve (1967) 250, who stated that the purpose of these marriages was to give the tyrant's family a special status above that of other Syracusan houses: 'Die Absicht dieser Heiratspolitik liegt auf der Hand: keine andere Familie sollte als gleichwertig gelten, das Herrscherhaus sozusagen autark über den vornehmen syrakusanischen Familien stehen.' It is unlikely that this is correct. First, Dionysius' family did not exclusively intermarry; Dionysius' first wife and Polyxenus and Hipparinus were not blood relatives of Dionysius. Second, the persons connected to Dionysius through marriage were either rich and influential individuals who provided the initial support for Dionysius' rise to power, or individuals who held military power within his regime, such as his brothers Leptines and Thearides. Dionysius was probably attempting to bind the most powerful men in Syracuse to him through marriage for the sake of security and to spread his influence.

marriage, also claiming that the son of Gygaea and Bubares, also called Amyntas, received the city of Alabanda from the Persian king (Hdt. 8.136). Marriage clearly continued to be an important practice for Classical tyrants and continued to be a method through which they could accumulate political capital.

*g) Disguising tyranny and appearing just*

Hesiod recorded a practice whereby the *basileus* received the approval of the community by giving just judgements (Hes. *Th.* 84-86). This section will show that displays of justice and benevolence towards the community remained an important method by which classical tyrants cultivated popular support and justified their elevated position.<sup>538</sup> One scholar has written that 'For ancient autocrats it was essential to control the military resources of the state, often by bringing men in from outside the state in order to control the citizen population.'<sup>539</sup> While it is true that military power and military success were vital for the maintenance of the tyrant's rule, the extent to which mercenaries and brute force enabled control over an unwilling population is debateable. Furthermore, this view overlooks the fact that tyrants tried to gain the support of native citizens through other means, rather than simply repressing them with foreign mercenaries. The Classical tyrants existed at a time when the rule of law had been the norm in Greece for several centuries, and when sole-rulers were denounced as threats to the persons and property of private citizens. To counter this hostility some Classical tyrants behaved conspicuously justly and upheld and adhered to the customary norms of their community. They also cloaked themselves in legitimate offices<sup>540</sup> and used the features of the rule-of-law

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<sup>538</sup> Harrell (2002) 449-450, has noted the importance of praise poetry for the public image of tyrants.

<sup>539</sup> Trundle (2006) 67. This view was also held by Parke (1933) 63.

<sup>540</sup> Sprawski (2006) 138, makes the point the Jason may have become *tagos*, a traditional office, to specifically avoid appearing tyrannical.

ideology, such as assemblies and courts, to dispose of their enemies. In the late fifth century Herodotus was aware that these methods might be employed and of the possibility that a man might use the administration of justice to take power. Herodotus described the rise of Deioces the Mede, an influential man who intentionally appeared just to the community in order to justify his accession to a tyranny (Hdt. 1.96). Herodotus' tale has Deioces amass enough popular support through his conspicuously just behaviour until the local communities were prepared to give him sole power.

Pindar praised Hieron for founding Aetna with *eleutheria* through the *nomoi* of Hyllus (Pind. *Pyth.* 1.62-63), and that he managed or ordered (διέπω) Ortygia 'with a pure sceptre' (Pind. *Ol.* 6.93). Pindar praises Hieron for having a *themisteion...skapton*, a sceptre of *themis* (Pind. *Ol.* 1.12).<sup>541</sup> The *Iliad* describes Zeus giving to the *basileus* his sceptre and the ability to administer *themis* (*Il.* 2.206) and the community prospering under the sceptre of a just ruler (*Il.* 9.295-298). Maeandrius, who succeeded Polycrates and desired to be the most just of men but became a tyrant, was said by Herodotus to have taken up Polycrates' sceptre (Hdt. 3.142).<sup>542</sup> Pindar's praise of Hieron seems to have drawn on an established association of rulers with justice, symbolised by their sceptres. Hieron's power is couched by the poet in terms of justice and protection of customary norms. Hieron's victory over the Carthaginians and Etruscans was also described by Pindar in terms of just punishment. Hieron, wrote Pindar, punished the *hybris* of these people (Pind. *Pyth.* 1.71-73). Nestor led his cattle raid to avenge the *hybris* of a neighbouring

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<sup>541</sup> Morrison (2007) 59, does not make the connection between the Homeric sceptre and that of Hieron, but does note that lines 12-13 of *Olympian* 1 imply that Hieron rules over all Sicily.

<sup>542</sup> Agamemnon inherited his sceptre from his father (*Il.* 2.46), and it was originally a gift from the gods (*Il.* 2.102-105).

people who had plundered his community and stolen from his father. When Pindar actually calls Hieron *turannos* he qualifies this with the word *lagetas* (Pind. *Pyth.* 3.85), a rare word meaning ‘leader of the people’.<sup>543</sup> Hieron’s behaviour towards other men is also used by Pindar to characterise his just rule. Hieron is kindly to the *astoi*, not envious of the *agathoi*, and a ‘wonderful father’ to *xenoi*. Hieron is depicted carefully observing the correct and just norms of behaviour (Pind. *Pyth.* 3.71).

During his brief account of the murder of Jason of Pherae, Xenophon implies that Jason sat in judgement over some of the disputes which arose among the people he ruled. We are told by Xenophon that during a review of his cavalry Jason allowed anyone to approach him with a request. Xenophon uses the participle *deomenos*, meaning to be in want of something or to beg a favour, in reference to these petitioners. Furthermore the seven assassins who killed Jason approached him as if they were in disagreement and wished him to resolve their argument (Xen. *Hell.* 6.31). Xenophon uses the word *diaphero* to describe these men which, in the context of litigation, means to struggle or quarrel. Xenophon appears to have considered Jason, his contemporary, as empowered, either legally or informally by virtue of his status, to judge and resolve disputes brought to him by private individuals. Isocrates praised Evagoras for punishing wrongdoers according to the law (Isoc. 9.43). Other tyrants made displays of piety and magnanimous behaviour. Diodorus noted that Gelon enjoyed the favour of the Sicilian Greeks because of his gentleness towards them and his mild rule (Diod. Sic. 11.67). In 404, during the most serious revolt against Dionysius I’s rule, Dionysius buried the bones of the Syracusans who died

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<sup>543</sup> Hornblower (2004) 64, is probably correct to see Pindar’s *λαγέτας τύραννος* as drawing from Homer; particularly from Agamemnon’s appellation of ‘shepherd of the people’.



fighting against him and swore to have no enmity for those who had revolted against him (Diod. Sic. 14.9.6-7). Diodorus states that the rebels who did return to Syracuse were treated benevolently by Dionysius (Diod. Sic. 14.9.9). The picture of Classical tyrants that emerges from the available evidence is one of a semi-formal judge conspicuously resolving individual cases or of an apparently benevolent ruler, respectful of the laws, who protected the community from external aggression.<sup>544</sup>

No Classical tyrant seems to have referred to himself as *turannos*<sup>545</sup> and the word itself does not appear to have become a more acceptable term in the Classical period.<sup>546</sup> The inscriptions on Deinomenid dedications are valuable evidence for the attitudes of tyrants towards the presentation of their own positions as these items

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<sup>544</sup> The Macedonian kings served as supreme judges in certain cases. Alexander's justice when hearing cases had become proverbial by the time of Plutarch (Plut. *Alex.* 42).

<sup>545</sup> Oost (1976) 224-225, has argued that the tyrants of Sicily, including the Dionysii, took the title of 'king': 'If ancient Greek politicians who occupied a monarchical position thought that they could profitably arrogate the ancient and prestigious name of king, it is a priori likely that they would do so. Men are ruled by words and symbols, as modern studies of political mystique and charisma have amply shown.' Oost's view rests on two fundamental misunderstandings. First, of the connotations of the word *basileus*. As shown in the first chapter, the Homeric *basileis* were not kings, hereditary monarchs or despots who held power by divine right or through an aura of mysticism. The *basileis* were local rulers who held power by virtue of their personal strength and their ability to enforce order and the customary norms of their people, yet remained answerable to the free community they ruled. Second, Oost assumes that a sole ruler could be made politically acceptable to the Archaic or Classical Greek *polis* if he adopted a certain title. There is simply no evidence to suggest that tyranny, an unaccountable sole ruler, was acceptable to the Archaic Greeks or their Classical descendents. Instead, as this chapter shows, the tyrants used a plethora of methods to increase their power, maintain their position and cultivate popular support while distancing themselves from the label 'tyrant'.

<sup>546</sup> Teegarden (2014) 1-11, views anti-tyranny legislation as a tool of the 'pro-democrats' within a *polis*. This view is unconvincing because, as the second chapter showed, articulate complaints against tyranny existed in the time of Solon and Theognis, long before the existence of a democracy in the style of fourth century Athens. A further problem with this view is that a number of contemporary Classical sources imply a widespread and popular condemnation of outright tyranny without ever linking that condemnation to any 'democratic' element within the *polis*. Aristotle noted that special honours were given to tyrant-killers (Arist. *Pol.* 1267a). Xenophon's *Hieron* claims that the assassins of tyrants not only avoided the penalties given to murderers, but received honours including statues in the sanctuaries (Xen. *Hieron.* 4.5). Xenophon also recorded two specific instances where tyrants were murdered. The killers of Jason were honoured in some cities because it was feared that Jason would become a tyrant (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.32), and Xenophon has one of the murderers of Euphron of Sicyon imply that a tyrant-killer would receive praise (Xen. *Hell.* 7.3.10). Isocrates also noted that tyrant-killers received the highest honours (Isoc. 8.143). For further discussion of this point, and Teegarden's use of the forged documents in Andocides 1, see Harris (2013/2014) 121-153; (2015a) 224-226.

effectively advertised them to the Greek world. The surviving dedications never use the terms *basileus* or *turannos*, although the original inscription on Polyzelus' charioteer at Delphi may have referred to the dedicator as *Gelas anasson*. The inscription on the base of one of Gelon's thank-offerings at Delphi declares that it was set up by 'Gelon the son of Deinomenes' (Tod 17; Meiggs and Lewis 28). The inscription on a bronze helmet from Olympia, dedicated as part of an offering of arms by Hieron after his victory at Cyme in 474, reads *ἡράπον ὁ Δεινομένεος καὶ τοὶ Συρακόσιοι τῷ Διὶ Τυράν' ἀπὸ Κύμας* (Tod 22; Meiggs and Lewis 29). Hieron is simply defined in the inscription as 'son of Deinomenes' and identified with 'the Syracusans'. The inscriptions on these dedications suggest that the Deinomenids had no desire to present themselves to the international Greek community as kings, let alone as tyrants. Almost a century later Dionysius I also avoided portraying himself as a tyrant. Dionysius I is referred to as '*archon* of Sicily' in an Athenian inscription of 394/3 (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 18; Rhodes and Osborne 10). A second Athenian inscription of 369/8, badly damaged but detailing negotiations with and honours for Dionysius I, contains a line, partially restored by Rhodes and Osborne, that again calls Dionysius I '*archon* of Sicily' (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 103; Rhodes and Osborne 33). A third inscription, dated to 368/7, may have referred to Dionysius as *archon*, although much of the word '*archon*' is a restoration (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 105; Rhodes and Osborne 34). It is unclear whether the presence of the word *archon* in these inscriptions is the consequence of an Athenian desire to reconcile Dionysius' tyranny with their own form of government and traditional hostility to tyranny or due to Dionysius' personal desire to refer to himself as a magistrate rather than a monarch or tyrant. However, given the unwillingness of the vast majority of Dionysius' fellow tyrants to refer to themselves as *turannoi* or *basileis*, it is probably the latter. Dionysius I did assume his tyranny

after being elected to a legitimate position by the citizens of Syracuse and Hieron was also called *archos* of the Syracusans (Pind. *Pyth.* 1.73), although Pindar does call him *turannos* elsewhere (Pind. *Pyth.* 3.85). It is also telling that Dionysius I is not ever referred to in these documents by a military office or by the office of *strategos autokrator* to which he was legally elected by the Syracusans. Leucon, the ruler of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, was not given any title by Demosthenes (Dem. 20.30), although the rulers of the region are called tyrants by Aeschines (Aesch. 3.171). Leucon was also given no title in the Athenian inscription that honoured his sons Spartocus, Paerisades and Apollonius, who were also not identified with any title (Rhodes and Osborne 64).<sup>547</sup>

Tyrants could make use of some of the features of the rule of law as well as appearing conspicuously generous or just. They even employed legal methods, such as the assemblies and the courts, to dispose of their political enemies rather than simply murdering them or driving them into exile, as Xenophon believed Euphron had done in Sicyon. Dionysius, aiming at the sole command, brought charges of corruption against his fellow generals in the assembly of Syracuse as well as some of the most prominent citizens. Dionysius succeeded in securing the dismissal of a number of officers in this manner (Diod. Sic. 13.91.4-92.2). Dionysius continued this method by encouraging the assembly to recall the citizens who had been exiled, almost certainly the old supporters of Hermocrates (Diod. Sic. 13.92.4-7). Unfortunately Diodorus only concludes that these exiles were persons who would look favourably on the creation of a tyranny in Syracuse, expecting to not only return to their own property but willing to let their enemies be killed and their property

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<sup>547</sup> See Harris (2008) 31, n.56.

confiscated. By achieving their return legally Dionysius avoided the need to use force to restore them to the city and avoided the suspicious accusations of tyranny aimed at Hermocrates and Dion (Plut. *Dion.* 48, 49). Dionysius I pursued this policy to the extent of using the assembly to condemn two of his most prominent opponents, Daphnaeus and Demarchus, to death (Diod. Sic. 13.96.3).<sup>548</sup> Dionysius may also have employed this method outside of Syracuse. At Gela Dionysius found the majority of the people in conflict with the wealthiest citizens. After using the Geloan assembly to have them executed, Dionysius took charge of the confiscated property, paying the Geloan mercenaries their arrears and doubling the pay of his own men. Diodorus notes that it was through this act that Dionysius secured the loyalty of his troops, Gela's mercenaries and the citizens of Gela (Diod. Sic. 13.93.1-4). The remaining citizens of Gela consequently regarded Dionysius as a liberator, publicly honouring him with a number of gifts (Diod. Sic. 13.93.4).<sup>549</sup> Dionysius continued to use the assembly in matters regarding war and peace. In 397 Dionysius brought the Syracusans together in assembly and convinced them to declare war on Carthage (Diod. Sic. 14.45.2-46.3). Despite the fact that Diodorus attributed a desire to take up arms and make an attempt against the tyranny to explain the Syracusan enthusiasm for war, Diodorus also states that there was genuine desire to subdue Carthage in Greek Sicily at this time. By clothing his power in these institutions Dionysius avoided an old charge against tyranny; that he was overthrowing the ancestral laws (Hdt. 3.80), and could appear closer to an acceptable *archon*. When Philomelos seized Delphi, he let it be known that he intended no harm to the sanctuary but was merely trying to overturn the unjust decrees of the Amphictyons

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<sup>548</sup> Cf. *Ar.Pol.* 1305a.

<sup>549</sup> The idea that Dionysius deliberately attempted to avoid an appearance of tyranny has been put forward by Sanders (1987) 92: 'Thirdly, we observe that Dionysius' avoidance of the title τύραννος and use of the appellation ἄρχων Συκελίας for international purposes indicates a very real desire on the tyrant's part to mask his tyrannical position and emphasise the constitutionality of his regime.'

and to defend the ‘ancestral laws’ of the Phocians (βοηθεῖν τοῖς πατρίοις νόμοις τῶν Φωκέων) (Diod. Sic. 16.24.5).

There is little reason to think that Classical tyrants ever referred to themselves, or were referred to by their supporters, as *turannoi*. It is more likely that each tyrant aimed to present himself as a war-leader, a *hegemon*, or an *archon*. The Classical tyrants continued to appear conspicuously just and benevolent in public and attempted to present themselves as pious towards the gods and public-spirited towards the community. They cloaked their power and their actions in established offices and claimed to be upholding the community’s laws by their actions. This behaviour not only encouraged popular support and distanced the tyrant from the stereotypical features of tyranny, but made the tyrant’s elevated and fundamentally dangerous position as sole ruler more palatable to the community.

### *Conclusion*

The previous chapter showed that the key to understanding Archaic tyranny is to acknowledge the continuity between the rulers of Homeric society and the practices of Archaic tyrants. The key to understanding Classical tyranny is to recognise the continuity between Archaic and Classical tyranny. Creating arbitrary divisions between Archaic and Classical, or Sicilian and mainland tyranny, does not result in a better understanding of the phenomenon. The chronological gaps between periods where tyranny appears more frequent may also be illusory. It has been noted elsewhere that the fifth century was a period in which the Greek world was largely free from tyrannical rule. The situation, however, is unlikely to be so straightforward. The fifth century saw the death of Hippias and the rise of one of the

most powerful Greek tyrants, Dionysius I. Furthermore, the last Deinomenid was not overthrown until 466 and Thucydides mentions a tyrant called Evarchus ruling Astacus on the Greek mainland in 431. It is simply not correct to regard the fifth century as an interval between Archaic and Classical tyranny. If there was any break between periods of tyranny in Greece it was certainly narrower than is generally accepted. In addition, there is a scarcity of contemporary source material to cover much of the fifth century. The interests of a prose writer like Herodotus often lay beyond the *poleis* of mainland Greece and Thucydides was primarily concerned with those individuals and states involved in the Peloponnesian War. These factors frustrate attempts to discover how many fifth-century tyrants may have been completely lost to history. It is also worth noting that the number of Archaic tyrants may have been inflated by Classical and later writers applying the label of ‘tyrant’ to rulers who may have been considered by their contemporaries as *basileis*. While exploring these two points further is beyond the scope of this thesis,

Andrewes referred to Classical tyranny in Sicily as ‘military monarchy’.<sup>550</sup> While military leadership, military success and force remained crucial to the security of the tyrant’s position, the view of Sicilian tyranny as highly militarised ignores the broad range of methods the Sicilian tyrants shared with Archaic and Classical tyranny. Sicilian tyranny, and Classical tyranny in general, does not require any new terminology to define it as there was no significant difference between the behaviour of the Archaic and Classical tyrants. Military success and military power continued to be crucial for the Greek tyrants, they assembled powerful forces and often led them in person. The tyrants also ingratiated themselves with their soldiers by the

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<sup>550</sup> Andrewes (1956) 128.

distribution of booty and pay. The tyrants, and some potential tyrants, often used legitimate military offices to gain control of the *polis*' military power before using it to impose their will on the city. This occurred not only in Sicily, where the ubiquitous and frightening presence of the Carthaginians arguably caused a more militarised environment, but on the Greek mainland too. The military reputation and popularity gained through successive victories and conquest enabled some tyrants to gain offices or authority on the strength of favourable public opinion. This is, for example, the manner in which Dionysius first came to power in Syracuse. Dionysius used his popularity, and the not inconsiderable help of some wealthy friends, to rise to the position of *strategos autocrator*. Control over military forces also enabled tyrants to secure the booty from captured settlements, sell populations into slavery, and to plunder territory for movable wealth. While the extent to which Classical tyrants relied on mercenaries to carry out campaigns or maintain their rule over unwilling subjects is debatable, they did make extensive use of these soldiers as they became more available over the course of the fifth century.

The interaction of Classical tyrants with religious custom remained remarkably consistent with their Archaic predecessors. Classical tyrants continued to place a tithe from their war-booty in the sanctuaries and to spend their wealth constructing temples, commissioning expensive dedications, and competing in the panhellenic festivals in honour of the gods. They organised state sacrifices and personally offered sacrifices to the gods. Some continued to be associated with oracles that generally confirmed them in their position and provided some legitimacy for the extent of their powers. The general impression given by the evidence is that

tyrants attempted to appear pious and assiduously conformed to the established practices regarding the worship of the gods.

While most of the accusations that certain tyrants aimed to plunder the panhellenic sanctuaries were demonstrably false, with the notable exception of the Phokian tyrants, they most likely grew out of the very real fact that, by necessity, tyrants were acutely concerned with gathering wealth. Classical tyrants were in constant need of money in order to engage in the practices discussed above, and large amounts of wealth were absolutely necessary to maintain the tyrant's position. Tyrants were compelled to spend sums of money on religious dedications, gifts and acts of public generosity. They also spent large sums on acquiring and rewarding mercenary support. The methods which tyrants used to gain wealth were varied. Tyrants sourced wealth from their own property, including land, from tithes, tribute from subject communities, plunder, the property of defeated or exiled enemies and the sale of war captives as slaves. This behaviour resulted in the tyrants acquiring a reputation for avarice and the circulation of stories describing their deceptive characters, money-grabbing and ostentation.

While Classical tyrants could theoretically use their wealth to acquire a mercenary force, or abuse a legally bestowed military office to seize power, they still required the active assistance of supporters to gain and maintain their position. Classical tyrants continued to practice the very old method of placing close friends and relatives by blood or marriage in positions of power, as subordinate rulers or using them as sources of wealth and military assistance. The sons of tyrants inherited their father's wealth, resources and a number of his relationships with friends and



allies, somewhat inevitably becoming tyrants themselves. Furthermore, tyrants used marriage to acquire political capital and the allegiance of the supporters of prominent families.

The link between the prosperity of the community and the justice of its rulers is apparent in the poems of Homer and Hesiod, and the conspicuous administration of justice was also an important practice for the Archaic tyrants. Several Classical tyrants appear to have dispensed justice and most made coordinated attempts to appear benevolent towards their community, presenting themselves as pious towards the gods and public-spirited. Many Classical tyrants clothed their power in legal offices and several claimed to be the protectors of the community's ancestral laws. Maintaining the established offices and practising just behaviour and public generosity encouraged popular support, distanced the tyrant from the stereotypical features of tyranny, and made the tyrant's power more tolerable to a Greek world that had had the capacity to recognise and guard against tyranny since the seventh century.

Isocrates wrote that governments of all kinds, presumably including monarchies, lasted longest when they cultivated and served the interests of the mass of citizens (*to plēthos*) (Isoc. 2.16). Consequently, most of the practices discussed above were, like those of their Archaic and Homeric predecessors, ultimately aimed at encouraging popular support for the Classical tyrant. This was especially true of rulers like Dionysius I, whose position and power would have been easily recognised by many Greeks as legally questionable if not outright tyrannical.<sup>551</sup> The Classical

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<sup>551</sup> Stroheker (1958) 147.

Greeks did not become more amenable to tyrants, as Caven has rightly argued regarding fifth-century Syracuse. 'The fate of Hermocrates had shown that the Syracusan Demos was not going to surrender tamely to any *hetaireia* or small private army.'<sup>552</sup> Tyrants were successful in the Classical period when they cultivated popular support and made some attempt to distance themselves from the features associated with tyranny. They conspicuously appeared to act justly, sometimes occupied legitimate offices and tried to be seen to uphold the norms of their communities. Even this tactic was anticipated by Pisistratus who was shown in the previous chapter to assiduously observe the norms of justice and religion, as well as maintaining the laws and offices of Athens intact and undisturbed, while effectively remaining the ruler of Athens.

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<sup>552</sup> Caven (1990) 52.

## Conclusion

Earlier attempts to define and discuss Greek tyranny have struggled to explain the phenomenon largely due to a flawed approach. This thesis has shown that the first step in studying tyranny should be to dispense with the unsupported assumption that it was a new phenomenon, and instead begin the study from the earliest evidence available for Greek rulers, the Homeric poems. The tendency of Greek historians to write monographs on Greek tyrants, generally on Pisistratus but more recently on the obscure Polycrates, is a particularly problematic way to study tyranny. Monographs on individual tyrants compel the historian to substitute speculation for analysis due to the scarcity of source material, and to plug the yawning gaps in the historical record of early tyrants with often-unreliable later sources. The best historical approach to tyranny is to concentrate on the earliest evidence available, collecting and utilising as much of this evidence as possible while remaining wary of anachronism and hostility in the sources. Studying the phenomenon of tyranny as a whole rather than the career of a single tyrant is therefore more effective. This approach provides broad patterns of behaviour that can be studied as a pool of evidence.

The various causes given by scholars for the rise of Greek tyranny have been shown to be unsupported by the evidence. The social and economic factors previously believed to have caused the phenomenon have been exaggerated, dated too early or simply did not exist in the Archaic period. The one radical change that certainly occurred in the political and social structure of Archaic Greece was the introduction of the rule-of-law ideology in the seventh century. Despite the fact that

there were concerns about the rule of the *basileis* voiced by Homer and Hesiod, such as their potential to engage in corruption or use their strength to seize the private property of others, their rule was still regarded as normative in these poems. No alternative to their rule was proposed. It was the rule of law that was the crucial change that brought about the shift in the way its adherents viewed Greek monarchs. The consequences of its establishment, such as division of powers, oversight, penalties for corrupt magistrates, limited terms of office etc, were entirely incompatible with the rule of one man. Furthermore, the close association between the rule of law and the prosperity of the community, voiced most eloquently by Solon's poetry, and the implied consent of the gods to this system, encouraged the demonization of the sole ruler. Monarchs in the Archaic period began to be seen as threats to the rights, persons and property of private individuals, and no longer as benevolent 'shepherds of the people'. They became the polar opposite of the rule of law. The *turannoi* of Archaic and Classical Greece were those individuals who persisted in using the methods of the eighth century to gain and maintain power. To understand the nature of Greek tyranny it is therefore essential to recognise the parallels between the behaviour of tyrants and the behaviour of Homeric *basileis*.

Much of the power and status of the Homeric *basileus* and the Greek tyrant was built on their ability to gather and lead military forces. For these rulers military success meant increasing popular support and windfalls of booty and slaves. Continuing success also justified the extent of their powers and their elevated status within the community. The *Iliad* depicts the *basileis* receiving land and status through their ability to provide military leadership. Conversely defeat, or military vulnerability, resulted in the loss of possessions, status or even in the ruler's death.

While participation in warfare and military leadership was one of the most significant methods used by *basileis* and tyrants to gain and maintain power, it should not be overemphasised. As we have seen, these rulers engaged with a series of practices which contributed to their power and status. The availability of mercenaries in the fourth century does not explain the rise in the number of tyrants in that period, as tyrants such as Pisistratus and Gelon were militarily successful at a time when the evidence for significant numbers of mercenaries is non-existent. Classical mercenaries were another useful tool for tyrants but their influence on tyranny as a phenomenon should not be over-emphasised.

Possession of substantial amounts of wealth was also essential. The *basileis* sourced treasure items with the agricultural surplus produced from their land, and accumulated wealth through raiding and exacting protection payments from the local community, a practice possibly continued by Pisistratus. Despite the disinterest of the sources in tyrants' ownership of land, some hint at the ownership of estates. Pisistratus' supporters came from a geographically defined region, suggesting a link between the tyrant and the local area, and Gelon's wife owned at least one estate outside Syracuse. Tyrants continued to receive gifts from persons seeking to secure their favour, and accumulated booty and slaves from military conquests, while using a range of other methods to collect the wealth they needed to sustain their position. In some cases this seems to have included taking control over the tax and tribute gathering mechanisms of the *polis*. However, the extent to which tyrant's private fortune was ultimately combined with what might be called public revenue is generally unclear. Regardless of the sources of this wealth, it was used deliberately to secure the position of the *basileus* and the tyrant. With it he rewarded supporters,

distributed largesse to the community, showed piety by building temples and paying for dedications and sacrifices, secured politically meaningful marriage alliances and attracted armed supporters and, from the fifth century onwards, paid for mercenaries.

One of the most strikingly consistent parallels between the eighth-century *basileis* and the tyrants is their interaction with religious practice. The Homeric *basileis* attempted to secure the gods' favour not only for themselves by associating themselves with favourable prophecies, but publicly attempted to gain it for their communities by dedicating military spoils, providing lavish sacrifices and ensuring that religious norms were upheld. Their ability to provide the most expensive sacrifices justified their position as protector and head of the community, while encouraging popular support through the maintenance of religious norms. Tyrants pursued all of these practices. They built temples, commissioned dedications and dedicated tithes of their war booty to the gods. The victories of Archaic and Classical tyrants at the panhellenic festivals were celebrated in poetry and through monumental dedications, earning the victors prestige and popularity at home and abroad. Many tyrants were associated with oracles and omens that seem to have foretold their future success, suggesting that they sought the same kind of superstitious legitimacy as the *basileis* had done. By engaging with religious norms tyrants demonstrated their own piety while offering protection and prosperity for the community by using their extensive resources to honour the gods.

The rule of Greek *basileis* and tyrants was marked by an inevitable reliance on close friends and family. Relatives by blood or marriage and friends, usually secured through a traditional practice such as guest-friendship, were given

subordinate roles by the ruler and key positions within his regime. The loyalty of these individuals appears to have been fairly secure and the tyrants' use of family members as army officers, subordinate rulers or officials presents a strong contrast with the Athenian systems of election and by lot. Even the earliest Archaic laws, which establish term limits for officials and the separation of powers, represent a radical departure from the monarch's appointment of relatives for whatever tasks he wished for as long as he wished. The deliberate use of friends and relatives remained a consistent method for the maintenance of personal power from the eighth century to the fourth. The practice of marriage also produced huge political gains for tyrants. Pisistratus is the most immediate example, securing a return from exile and armed supporters through his marriages, although Dionysius I also married in order to secure the neutrality of at least one Greek *polis*. Even communities that were free from tyranny recognised the significance of this practice. The Athenians were well aware of the value of a marriage between a friendly tyrant and a favourable candidate, and they attempted to secure a marriage alliance between Evagoras of Salamis and Dionysius I that would suit the interests of Athens.

The association between tyrants and the administration of justice has caused scholars of the Archaic period to misinterpret this behaviour as social and political reform. In reality, the tyrants continued the practices of the Homeric *basileis* who resolved disputes and maintained the norms of their community in return for gifts and popular support. This practice directly contributed to their status and the maintenance of their power. Herodotus' tale of Deioces the Mede explains why tyrants continued to pursue this practice, describing how Deioces resolved to appear just in order to accumulate enough popular support to become a tyrant. This explains

the confusing association of tyrants like Cypselus, Periander and Pisistratus with anecdotes and prophecies that highlighted their just behaviour. The Archaic and Classical tyrants disguised their power by sometimes occupying legitimate offices, referring to themselves with legitimate titles, and maintaining features of the rule of law, such as assemblies or other civic bodies and institutions. No tyrant seems to have referred to himself as a *turannos*, and tyrants such as Dionysius I and Jason of Pherae appear to have made calculated attempts at increasing their power through the occupation of legitimate offices that held military and civil authority, while using these offices to cloak the tyrannical nature of their power.

The methods these rulers used to gain and maintain power continued from the eighth century to the fourth, and were comprised of a broad and highly personal series of methods that they employed to take and hold power. Tyrants were not reactionary aristocrats, demagogic leaders of the lower classes, or princes appealing for a return to ancestral rule. They were the individuals who persisted in using the practices of the eighth-century *basileis* in spite of the existence of the rule-of-law ideology. These practices were ultimately aimed at securing popular support within the *polis* for the tyrant himself. This view of Greek tyranny is not a rigid categorisation of sole rulers; rather it reflects the very personal nature of the Greek tyrant's power and authority. It allows for the fact that some tyrants preferred to rely on some of the above practices more than others, and admits that variables, such as the introduction of significant mercenary forces in the fifth century, were also adopted and used by tyrants in their quest for power. To claim that Greek tyrants were a new, revolutionary or reactionary form of ruler that first appeared in seventh-century Greece is demonstrably wrong. The spread of the rule-of-law ideology from



the seventh century prompted those Greeks who adhered to its principles to view monarchy, the rule of one man, as dangerous, violent and lawless. The Greek tyrants remained quite consistent in their use of eighth-century practices to gain and maintain power. As the word *basileus* continued to be applied to legitimate public office in the Greek world, a new term was needed to describe the unrestrained rule of one man. The new word was τύραννος and the Greeks applied it to an old phenomenon.

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